THE CHRISTIAN MONITOR

Earneſtly and compaſſionately perſwading Sinners unto true and timely REPENTANCE, by the Serious view of the ſeven following weighty CONSIDERATIONS.

1. The ſtupendious love of God unto man in Chriſt Jeſus.
2. The great danger of DESPAIR, and greater of PRESUMPTION.
3. The ſweetneſs, eaſineſs and pleaſantneſs of the ways of God.
4. The falſhood & flattery of the ways of ſin.
5. The ſafe, joyful and bleſſed ſtate of the RIGHTEOUS.
6. The dangerous and moſt deplorable ſtate of the wicked.
7. The ſhortneſs and uncertainty of life, terrous and amazements of an unprepared Death, and ETERNITY of puniſhments after DEATH.

Generally uſeful for all private Families.

Let every one that calleth on the name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity, 2 Tim. 2. 19.

By *Tho. Fettiplace*, Dom. Pet. Cant.

London, Printed by *E. Tyler* and *R. Holt*, for *Will. Miller*, at the Sign of the Gilded Acorn in S. *Paul*'s Church yard, near the little North door. 1672.

493 l 21.

IMPRIMATUR,

Jan. 23. 7½ *Guliel. Wigan Rev. in Chriſto P. ac D° D° Humf. Epiſ. Lond. à Sac. Dom.*

THE CHRISTIAN MONITOR

Earneſtly and compaſſionately perſwading Sinners unto true and timely REPENTANCE, by the Serious view of the ſeven following weighty CONSIDERATIONS.

1. The ſtupendious love of God unto man in Chriſt Jeſus.
2. The great danger of DESPAIR, and greater of PRESUMPTION.
3. The ſweetneſs, eaſineſs and pleaſantneſs of the ways of God.
4. The falſhood & flattery of the ways of ſin.
5. The ſafe, joyful and bleſſed ſtate of the RIGHTEOUS.
6. The dangerous and moſt deplorable ſtate of the wicked.
7. The ſhortneſs and uncertainty of life, terrous and amazements of an unprepared Death, and ETERNITY of puniſhments after DEATH.

Generally uſeful for all private Families.

Let every one that calleth on the name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity, 2 Tim. 2. 19.

By *Tho. Fettiplace*, Dom. Pet. Cant.

London, Printed by *E. Tyler* and *R. Holt*, for *Will. Miller*, at the Sign of the Gilded Acorn in S. *Paul's* Church yard, near the little North door. 1672.

BRITISH MUSEUM
15
61
MAY

TO THE WORSHIPFUL

His Worthily Honoured Brother

HENRY CLITHEROW, Esq;

the happy increase and continuance of all Spiritual and Temporal blessings in this Life, and the blessed fruition of Eternal Joys in that to come.

Honoured SIR,

THE Pious lives of your Worthy and Religious Ancestors; your many and your great civilities towards me and mine; the rich mercy I enjoy in the chaste imbraces of your vertuous and Religious Sister, my truly loving, and most dearly beloved Wife; But above all, your

Piety to God, your Filial obedience to your Mother the Church of *England*; your Loyal heart to your Sovereign, and your loving heart to your relations, are the obliging motives of this my Dedication; your kind acceptance whereof I muſt ever own, as a loving addition to your former favours.

Repentance, Sir, is a grace ſo excellent, a work ſo neceſſary for all thoſe that deſire to lead their lives in all godlineſs, and honeſtly as becometh Chriſtians, that the moſt righteous man alive may find in himſelf cauſe enough (if not too much) to make a gracious,

cious, and a daily improvement of it; for ſuch and ſo many are the deceits of our corrupt hearts, (which above all things are moſt deceitful, as the Prophet *Jeremiah* aſſureth us, *Jer.* 17.9.) and ſo manifold the failings of our lives and actions, that if we ſhall indeavor daily (as we ought) to take a ſerious and a ſtrict view and account of them, we may well wonder we are ever from our knees: from whence was holy *David*'s pious confeſſion and humble petition, *Pſal.* 19.12. *Who knoweth the errours of his life? Lord cleanſe thou me from my ſecret faults.* It therefore con-

cerns us all (even the very beſt of us) with him to ſet ſtrict watches over our hearts, that we offend not with our tongues; to look narrowly to our ways that we tranſgreſs not in our actions; to reckon daily with our ſouls for ſin, and when we find that (thorough the frailty of our corrupt natures) we have ſlip'd or fallen, to pray alſo (as holy *David* did) that we may riſe again by true and timely **Repentance**.

Our lives are ſwift, ſhort, and uncertain, full of weakneſſes, frailties, and infirmities, daily and hourly expoſed unto many difficulties and great

great and unknown dangers; every moment paſſing, and never returning; and yet this ſhort ſpan, this ſmall *punctum* of time, this vain ſhadow (this meer nothing in compare of that which ſhall remain for ever) is that on which **Eternity** dependeth: It behoves us all therefore, with Chriſtian care and holy diligence, (by this bleſſed work of **Repentance**, ſanctification to righteouſneſs, and godly perſeverance) to make our callings & elections ſure, while it is called to day (even this bleſſed day of Grace, while we have yet time, and gracious opportunities to repent in;) for the

night of Death cometh when we cannot work, and the day of Judgement cometh when time ſhall be no more.

Hitherto as a Chriſtian (in reference to the ſubject of my following diſcourſe) I have thought it my duty (as your Chriſtian **Remembrancer**) to mind you of that *Hoc unicum neceſſarium*, without the daily exerciſe and improvement whereof, your Life can neither be comfortable nor your Death happy; and which (by reaſon of the cares and troubles, profits and pleaſures, ſins and miſeries, with other ſuch like diſturbers of the reſt and

quiet

quiet of our Souls in this Vain and Tranſitory Life) we are all too apt to forget: Give me now leave I beſeech you as a Relation both to own and incourage thoſe your **Moral** vertues, which perhaps your Chriſtian modeſty may deſire to be concealed.

Since the time of my happy acquaintance with you I have (with Chriſtian comfort) conſtantly obſerved your life and converſation to be ſuch, as may be truly ſtiled blameleſs, and (as the Apoſtle's phraſe is) unſpotted of the world: Your ſpirit noble and generous, to injoy the

bleſſing of your plentiful eſtate with comfort; your **Temperance** and **Sobriety** both pious, and exemplary, even in the midd'ſt of a Licentious and debauched generation; your **Integrity** and **Uprightneſs** ſquared piouſly ſuitable to the Apoſtles Rule, owing nothing to any man but Love; and (which is the crown of all) your *ſincerity* of heart in all theſe (in your willing obedience unto Gods holy commands) free from the leaſt ſtain of hypocriſie; from whence (to your Souls happineſs) your praiſe is not of men, but of God: Go on Sir, in theſe holy paths

of

of **Godlineſs** and **Honeſty**, with joy and comfort; which will at laſt lead you from an happy Life, to a bleſſed Death; from a ſafe and quiet ſleep in the grave, to a joyful and a glorious reſurrection; from your earthly to your heavenly inheritance, which Chriſt your **Redeemer** hath both purchaſed and prepared for you: for your bleſſed injoyment whereof (with the happy increaſe of all thoſe heavenly *graces* eternally ordained as the bleſſed means conducing to this bleſſed end) as (by **Gods** gracious aſſiſtance) you have herein

in

in the weak indeavours, ſo ſhall you ever have the zealous prayers of,

SIR,

Your affectionately loving

Brother and Humble

Servant,

THO. FETTIPLACE.

TO THE Impenitent Sinner, Grace Mercy and Peace in Jeſus Chriſt, by true and timely Repentance.

READER,

HOSOEVER thou art who art yet in thy Sins, conſider with me ſeriouſly and timely (I pray thee) of thy ſad and deplorable condition, by the View of theſe weighty, and important particulars following.

Think often (with aſtoniſhment,) that while thou art out of Chriſt, thou canſt not behold God as thy Merciful and Loving Father, but as thy juſt and incenſed Judge; a God moſt terrible and amazing to thoſe affrighted Souls that ſeek him not by true and

and timely ſorrow for their Sins; a God to whom vengeance belongeth, to reward the wicked anſwerable to their evil ways: his Eſſence light inacceſſible, unto which no ſinful eye can approach; his attributes terrour unutterable, from which no ſinful Soul can eſcape; his Wiſdom ſearching into the ſecrets of thy Corrupt heart, and trying thy ſinful reins, who is ever nearer to thee than thou art unto thy ſelf, in whom alone thou liveſt, moveſt, and enjoyeſt this thy Being: who is about thy bed and about thy paths and ſpieth out all thy ſinful ways: His power unreſiſtible; what he Will he Doth, in Heaven, in Earth, and under the Earth, and who ſhall ſay unto him what doſt thou? *his Truth yeſterday and to day and for ever the ſame; no judgment pronounced againſt thee but ſhall be preciſely fulfilled; The heavens ſhall paſs away as a ſcrowl, the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the Earth*

Earth with all the ſinful works there-of ſhall be burn'd up and paſs away, but not one tittle of thy threatened puniſhments ſhall paſs: His holineſs ſuch and ſo tranſcendently eminent, that even his holy Angels are impure in his ſight, whoſe ever bleſſed being cannot behold iniquity, even in the very leaſt appearance of it, but with holy deteſtation: Think then ô thou unhappy ſoul (who drinkeſt iniquity like water, and draweſt on ſin with Cart-ropes,) (and tremble when thou thinkeſt of it) with what confuſion of face, with what horrour of Conſcience, with what terrour and amazement of ſoul thou muſt one day ſtand before this Juſt and Righteous Judge of all the Earth, when the book of thy Conſcience ſhall be opened, and thy ſins ſet in order before thee with all their ſinful aggravations; how odious thinkeſt thou muſt they then appear in thine own eyes, when their falſe momentany pleaſures

are

are paſt and gone, and their guilt and puniſhment eternally remain? How much more abominable in Gods ſight, who is purity it ſelf, even in that higheſt and moſt bleſſed abſtract, which ſtands eternally directly oppoſite to all impurity? for if the Righteous ſhall ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the wicked and ſinner appear? O conſider this, thou that (ſtill) forgetteſt God, leſt he tear thee in pieces and there be none to deliver thee.

Thou haſt already to the terrour of thy Conſcience ſeen the ſadneſs of thy loſt condition out of Chriſt; Now (to thy ſouls exceeding comfort) ſee, ô ſee and joyfully believe the goodneſs of a gracious God, by the ſweetneſs of his gracious promiſes, by the unchangeable truth of his bleſſed performances, by the timely forewarning of his Prophets, by the earneſt beſeechings of his Apoſtles, by the compaſſionate bewailings, and willing ſufferings

ferings of his onely and beloved Son, by the frequent viſits of his holy Spirit in thee, and (to the great wonder of thy rebellious mind) by his (moſt to be admired) patience and long ſuffering towards thee; Inviting, perſwading, alluring, intreating, even compelling thee to mercy and forgiveneſs. If now (after all theſe miracles of rich mercy ſhewed unto thee, and thus graciouſly conferr'd upon thee) thou ſtill reſolveſt to remain obſtinate by thy ungracious perſiſting in thy rebellious courſes, and thereby crucifying again unto thy ſelf the Lord of Life, (whereby the rich expence of that moſt precious blood is now become in vain unto thee,) hear then to thy deſerved ſhame & endleſs ſorrow, what thine incenſed God by the mouth of his holy Prophet Iſaiah *hath yet farther to ſay unto thee;* Judgement will I lay to the rule, and righteouſneſs to the ballance, *Iſai.* 28.17. *That gracious God, who (upon thy*

true

true & timely repentance) *would have botteled up thy tears, will now for ever ſeal up thy tranſgreſſions; their growth, number, nature, and continuance, all are recorded, for the judgement of the great day: If this be not yet enough to recal thee, hear farther, what the Lord hath ſaid unto thee,* Becauſe I have called and ye have refuſed, becauſe I have ſtretched out my hand (*of mercy*) and none would regard, I will alſo laugh at your deſtruction, and mock when your fear cometh, *Prov.*24.26. *As thou haſt made a mock at ſin, ſo God will make a mock at Puniſhment, and then conſider with S.*Paul, *that* it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, *Heb.*10th. *to receive that dreadful ſentence of* Go ye curſed into everlaſting torments prepared for the Devil and his Angels, *where none eye ſhall pitty thee, and he who alone can help thee, ſhall for ever ſhut up his bowels of compaſſion from thee.* Con-

Conſider yet farther that thy days, thy hours, thy very minutes perhaps, are in Gods hand to diſpoſe of them as it ſeemeth beſt unto his Godly Wiſdom; thou canſt not challenge of them the leaſt moment as thine own; how ſinfully vain then art thou to promiſe to thy ſelf both months and years? The Lord for ought thou knoweſt may ſay unto thee, as unto him in the Goſpel; Thou fool this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee, *and then whoſe are thoſe ſhort ſinful pleaſures thou haſt ſo fooliſhly exchanged for thoſe rivers of eternal joys? Ah, my dear brother, as the tree falleth ſo it muſt lie for ever. Let me therefore earneſtly beg of thee (as thou loveſt thy precious ſoul) ſeriouſly yet farther to conſider, that the longer thou continueſt in ſin the farther thou art off from Grace, and the nearer to deſtruction. The bleſſed wind of Gods holy Spirit bloweth but where it liſteth; when it is once gone, thou knoweſt not whether*

ther it may ever return; and then woe be unto thy ſoul for ever when thy time of calling is once paſt. O welcome therefore theſe indeared motions of his ever Bleſſed Spirit, and cheriſh not the leaſt motions of thy ſinful heart to evil, but pray often and earneſtly that thou mayſt withſtand them: Delight will beget thy Conſent, thy conſent Action, Action cuſtome, Cuſtome habit, Habit perſeverance, Perſeverance obduracy of Heart, and that final impenitency, from which the Lord in his rich mercy deliver thee. There being then nothing elſe to be ſpoken to thee but that fearful ſaying of thine incenſed Judge, Rev.22.11. He that is unjuſt let him be unjuſt ſtill, and he that is filthy let him be filthy ſtill: for behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to render unto every one according to his works. *If thou ſtill reſolveſt to continue in thy Obſtinacy and Rebellion againſt him,*

him, he will therefore leave thee to thy ſelf, to fill up the meaſure of thine iniquities here, that he may pay thee home, with the like proportion of his puniſhments hereafter.

Think ſeriouſly and timely I pray thee of what I have ſaid, as matter well worthy of thy deepeſt conſideration; and the Lord (in his rich mercy unto thee) open thy ſinful eyes, in all things belonging to thy ſouls comfort, that thou mayeſt thereby clearly ſee the ſadneſs and fearfulneſs of thy loſt Condition, and timely apprehend the greatneſs and ſeverity of Gods wrath againſt thee; That ſo by humble confeſſion of thy Sins, hearty Prayers, and penitent tears, thou mayſt obtain true godly ſorrow for them, an holy revenge againſt them, gracious perſeverance in a ſanctified Life, and entrance into joys unſpeakable and glorious by a Bleſſed Death. All which I heartily and compaſſionately wiſh thee, in and thorough him

him who hath (I hope) ſtill bowels of compaſſion for thee, who came not into the world to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance, who now ſeeketh thee that art loſt, and who, I truſt, will yet find thee whom he hath ſo long ſought, and never loſe thee when thou art found; Even Jeſus Chriſt the righteous; to whom, with the Father and the holy Spirit, be all glory, honour, dominion, thankſgiving and humble adoration now and for ever. Amen.

Compaſſionately thine

For the ſaving of thy

Sin ſick Soul.

THO. FETTIPLACE.

The Christian Monitor.

HAving now (by Gods gratious goodneſs towards me) attained near unto the ſeventieth year of mine age, and (by his rich mercy) ſeriouſly conſidering with my ſelf how large a portion of my precious hours I have ſpent amiſs; I have thought it now high time for me to ſeclude my ſelf from the ſinful pleaſures of this vain and tranſitory Life, and to betake my ſelf wholly (for the ſhort remainer of my days to come) unto thoſe more bleſſed thoughts, and pious Meditations, which are belonging to my future and eternal Peace; That ſo I may thereby indeavour to redeem that precious time, which I can never recal, and (by true ſorrow for my ſins paſt, holy mortifica-

tion unto all Sin for my time preſent, and bleſſed Sanctification unto Righteouſneſs for my time to come) ſet ſtrict watches over the ſhort remnant of my life, that ſo I may alſo bring glory unto my God, good unto his children, and reſt unto mine own Soul.

IT is thou O Lord that workeſt in me both to will and to do; by the bleſſed inſpiration of thine ever bleſſed Spirit, I was moved to this following work. O Let that holy Spirit of thine work with me in it (for where thou workeſt there can be nothing wanting.) Lord magnifie thy power in my weakneſs, & ſo aſſiſt my ſinful nature by thy ſaving grace, that I may wholly dedicate the ſhort remainer of my ſinful days to thy ſervice. Lord Jeſus accept of me, and interpoſe thy bleſſed merits for me; O let not thoſe the often failings of my ſinful life paſt, obſcure the graces of thy holy Spirit from me, nor quench the motions of that bleſſed Spirit in me, but let Jeſus Chriſt be righteouſneſs, and holineſs, and ſanctification, and redemption unto me: And then I know I ſhall appear a Bleſſed ſoul before thee. Lord perfect what thou haſt begun in me. Graciouſly accept of it, and give thy bleſſing to it. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Of the Blessed and eternal Being in whom we live and move and have our beings.

INSOMUCH as the holy Apostle S. *Paul* telleth us, *Heb.* 11. 6. *That he which cometh unto God must* first *believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of all such as seek him diligently*: And considering likewise that in all ages of the world (but more especially in this wherein we live, (the last, the worst, the very dregs of time) there formerly have been, and still are here amongst us, too many of those fools which *Davids* days afforded, such, who have not only said in their hearts, but likewise daily manifest it both by their blasphemous tongues, and wicked actions, that there is no God: I have therefore thought it, not onely convenient, but absolutely necessary for me, in order to the present work in hand, to prove that there is a God; and for a time (laying aside the blessed word of God (the joy and comfort of all true believers) but unto them a meer laughing stock and foolishness) to deal with them as S. *Paul* with his beasts at *Ephesus*, to meet them at their own sinful weapons, the light of Nature and the force of Reason, in hope thereby they may (in his due time whom they so sinfully deny) attain unto the happy light of grace, by which they may at last be safely guided to the blessed light of glory.

Hear therefore O thou prophane wretch, what that blessed and eternal being, (even by

that very light of nature which thou enjoyeſt onely by him whom thou denieſt) hath to ſay unto thee, and the Lord in his rich mercy open thy ſinful eyes, that thou mayſt in this thy day both manifeſtly ſee, and faithfully believe, thoſe bleſſed truths which belong unto thy peace, leſt they be hereafter for ever hid from thine eyes, when to thy ſoul's and bodie's everlaſting diſcomforts, ſince thou wilt not here own him in the richneſs of his mercy, thou ſhalt there feel him in the rigour of his Juſtice; for the timely prevention whereof read (and conſider well) theſe following Reaſons.

Firſt. If there were not a Being which had no beginning, then that which was firſt exiſtent, muſt of inforced neceſſity be a beginning unto it ſelf, by cauſing it ſelf to be, when it was not; but it is utterly impoſſible that any thing ſhould bee a cauſe and not be, for ſo ſhould it both be, and not be, and ſo likewiſe ſhould the effect be contrary to the cauſe, ſeeing that not being which is eternally evil, ſhould produce a Being which is good: therefore it muſt clearly and undoubtedly follow, that there is an eternal good Being, the Fountain and beginning of all good things, He himſelf without beginning, and this eternal good Being is God.

Secondly. Seeing it is plain, that there is Being which could not poſſibly raiſe it ſelf out of not Being, it muſt as neceſſarily follow, that Being was before not being: and becauſe it is as equally impoſſible, that this being can be ſaid to be not being, by its ceaſing to be, therefore this Being is eternal, and this eternal being is God.

Thirdly.

Thirdly. That Eternity is, even mans frail reason may in some frail measure apprehend; for it is impossible for Mans understanding, to imagine any point, or to suppose any beginning of any thing imaginable to be, before which some other continuance may not likewise be conceived to be, and so on, to a progression infinite; therefore it is most certain that eternity is; And this Eternity must either be Eternity of Being, or of Privation, or not Being: But if in Eternity thou putteſt Privation or not Being not the least atome of this vast universe could possibly be the Production of it, and so should not then this goodly structure of the world and Man have had a Being; so should Eternity it self remain eternally evil; by its not producing the least good: and so should evil have the priority of good, both in its being and effects; for that which is first, must needs be a cause to that which must follow; so that not being, being eternally evil, it was utterly impossible that any thing visible could be produced good, therefore there is an eternal good Being and that is God.

Consider next that the greatest excellency and perfection of every thing is the likeness thereof unto the first cause; but Reason telleth thee, that every thing is more excellent in the Being thereof than in the not being, therefore in the being it is most like the first cause, for otherwise it could not be: from whence it will necessarily follow that the first cause is most of all BEING, and therefore must of necessity precede not Being, and so consequently be eternal; and this eternal Be-

ing is God bleſſed for ever.

And for the cloſe of theſe my Reaſons (which I rather have confined to choice than inlarged to multitude) take this, my laſt (and all I have to ſay unto thee) to convince thee that there is a God.

All inferior excellency muſt needs have its ſubordination, as the effect from the cauſe, for nothing can poſſibly be in the effect, which is not primarily and far more tranſcendently in the power of the firſt cauſe: Now ſeeing no ſpace imaginable can be ſo great, but that it is eaſily poſſible to the underſtanding of man (a created being) to conceive a ſpace and infinite of ſpaces far more large than that, and that of all theſe infinites, it is not any way poſſible for him to put a period (a *non plus ultra*) to the very uttermoſt or largeſt ſpace of all thoſe infinites, beyond which he cannot ſtill imagine a far greater ſpace than all the former; his underſtanding being only finite, muſt needs yield that there is a BEING infinite, that fills all ſpace, and yet is infinitely greater than it, and this infinite and eternal BEING is God.

Having now already indeavoured to make it clear unto thee by the light of Nature, that God is; It remaineth that I likewiſe ſhew thee in the next place (even by the ſame light) what he is, that thou mayſt thereby (ſo far as the dim ſight of thy frail reaſon will admit,) Admire him in his wiſdom, Fear him in his power, Believe him in his Truth, tremble at him in his Juſtice, embrace him in his mercy, and in all theſe his holy Attributes (which are truly and eternally himſelf) adore him

in

in his infinite, glorious and eternal Eſſence.

If God Be, and this his Being without beginning, as hath before (I hope) been clearly proved, it muſt needs follow that he is alſo without ending; becauſe he cannot have any thing before him as ſuperiour to him, which might any way poſſibly bring him to nothing; therefore God is eternal both before and after, from everlaſting to everlaſting he is God: Now whatſoever is eternal muſt alſo be infinite, becauſe Eternity it ſelf is infinite: and whatſoever hath an infinite continuance, hath alſo an infinite power to continue infinitely, and whatſoever hath infinite Power ſo to continue, muſt alſo be infinitely wiſe to uphold this infinite power; Therefore this eternal, infinite, Almighty, wiſe Being muſt need be God.

Now whatſoever is God, muſt likewiſe be *True*, *Holy*, *Good*, *Merciful*, and *Juſt*: True, becauſe all falſhood is in not being, and God is moſt *being*, therefore moſt true; *Holy*, otherwiſe imperfection ſhould be found in that which is moſt of all perfect, and ſo infinity ſhould ſuffer Diminution and not Be, which is utterly impoſſible; *Good*, otherwiſe not any thing exiſtent could have its being, neither is it poſſible there can be that in the creature, which is not primarily and eſſentially in God the Creatour; *Merciful*, otherwiſe the creature could not poſſibly have its continuance, for the leaſt moment of time, nor attain unto the end for which it was created; *Juſt*, for otherwiſe he could be neither *True*, *Merciful* nor *Good*, for by Juſtice his Truth is confirmed, his goodneſs declared, and his mercy exalted: He

is therfore truly, infinitely, & eternally all these in the abstract, so that he is not onely true but *Truth* it self, *Holiness*, *Goodness*, *Mercy* and *Justice* themselves, which because they are all infinite, and that it is impossible that there can be any more than one infinite, although they appear unto us divers, are yet but one and the same, infinite and eternal Being which is God blessed for ever.

Look now upon the glorious fabrick of the universe, and thou shalt there see the footsteps of a Sacred Deity, even in the very least and despicable being: what creature canst thou behold attentively, and not discern the wisdom of the great Creatour? Go to the Pismire and thou mayst there see more miracles than parts, what curious proportion of members, what variety, and distinction of offices, what due Symmetry of proportions, what agility and industry of action, and by what, almost invisible, vitals maintained, and continued, and above all, what prudent care in storing her provision, mayst thou there behold? Now seeing by experience we daily find that every thing brought forth in nature hath its proper and peculiar end unto which nature directs it, and that Nature her self must have a Directour to teach her to direct the creature; It must thence follow, that whatsoever it is that directs nature, it must of necessity be something above nature, and this something must be that eternal Being (from whome nature had her being in time) and that is God.

Consider next, I pray thee, the vast extent, incomparable beauty, constant motion, and regular

gular courſes of the Heavens, adorned with innumerable ſtars (moſt of them in magnitude ſurpaſſing the whole globe of the earth) beautified with diverſity of Planets, (each of them placed in its ſeveral Orb) and theſe ſo qualified with divers and unequal motions, that they neither move together, nor are the leaſt impediment each unto other. Conſider likewiſe that theſe motions are not for themſelves but for other more inferiour and ſubordinate bodies, which (as thou daily ſeeſt) are moved and altered by the air and other elements, thoſe by the divers motions of the moon and influences of the ſuperiour Planets, and all theſe by that one and conſtant motion of that higheſt Orb or Sphear, beyond which thou canſt not (in nature) place a farther Being. Now Philoſophy will tell thee, that whatſoever is moved, muſt of neceſſity be moved of another: Seeing therefore that the firſt Motion cannot move it ſelf, it muſt from thence follow that ſomething elſe muſt move it; and if I ſhall farther ask thee (as in reaſon of neceſſity I muſt) who moveth that which moveth this, thou muſt ſtill be driven unto infinite of movers, until at laſt thou art compel'd to reſt and terminate in One, who moveth all, and is not moved of another, and that is God.

Now ſeeing that in all theſe motions there is not any one that moveth to it ſelf but to another, as thou daily ſeeſt the motion of the ſupream Orb is not to ſerve it ſelf, but to move the inferior, and theſe likewiſe by their ſeveral influences, not ſerving themſelves but the inferiour Bodies; the water thereby ebbing and

flowing, in its conſtant and perpetual courſe; the Rain moiſtening and cheriſhing, the Air cooling and opening, the Sun heating and quickening the Earth, and all this to make it fruitful, and to bring forth her fruits in due ſeaſon, not for her ſelf but for the uſe of Man: Thou maiſt from thence then rationally conclude that Man (the moſt excellent of all the creatures, for whoſe onely ſake, and unto whoſe uſe alone, the whole Creature hath its being) was not poſſeſt of all this happineſs to ſerve himſelf neither, but ſome more excellent being than himſelf, as the true, ſole, and ultimate end of his creation; that ſo finding no full ſatisfaction in the Creature, he might find reſt in ſomewhat both above and out of it. Now ſeeing he can find nothing here viſible to invite him to this ſervice; it will from thence moſt neceſſarily follow, that he had his Being to ſerve that infinite and inviſible Being which is God.

Theſe few reaſons (if thou haſt ought of reaſon in thee) may ſerve to ſhew thee, even by the light of nature, that there is a God; and when this God (in his rich mercy to thee) ſhall vouchſafe to open thy ſinful unbelieving eyes by the bleſſed operation of his holy Spirit in thee, thou wilt then more comfortably and joyfully ſee him to be thy God; affectionately loving thee in Chriſt from all eternity, and tenderly and compaſſionately caring for thee by his continual acts of holy providence towards thee; guiding thee ſo here by his counſel, that he may hereafter receive thee to his glory. Into this more bleſſed light, (out of thy

ſinful

ſinful darkneſs) the Lord I truſt will in his due time bring thee; that thou maiſt more comfortably ſee him, joyfully believe in him, intirely love him, faithfully and conſtantly ſerve him, and for ever reſt in him. *Which the Lord grant ſpeedily unto thee in him alone in whom I hope he hath compaſſion for thee, even Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous.* Amen.

CHAP. II.

Of the ever bleſſed, Sacred and Miſterious TRINITY in UNITY.

TO believe God in his Eſſence, to own him in his Attributes, to ſtand amazed at his glory, and to be ſwallowed up in the very view of the vaſt Ocean of his Eternity; will rather aſtoniſh and affright, than in the leaſt relieve and comfort thee; for all this even the very Devils themſelves do verily believe and tremble at: It is therefore needful that I farther ſhew unto thee, (and that even by thy very light of nature) that he is three in one, One in Eſſence, three in exiſtence, One in being, three in Manner of Being; One God, three Perſons, coinfinite, coequal, coeternal; neither before nor after other, becauſe coeternal; neither greater nor leſs than other, becauſe coinfinite; neither above nor under other, becauſe coequal; and yet the Father begetting, the Son begotten, and the holy Ghoſt proceeding; and likewiſe the Father God, the Son God, and the holy Ghoſt God, and yet they are not three Gods but one God; the Father likewiſe

wise Eternal, the Son Eternal (although begotten of the Father) and the holy Ghost (although proceeding from them both) Eternal; & yet they are not three Eternals, but one Eternal; the Father infinite, the Son (notwithstanding the infinity of the Father) infinite, and the holy Ghost, (although proceeding from them both) infinite, and yet they are not (nor is it possible they can be) three infinites, but one infinite.

That God should be thus three and yet one, is hard for me to utter, and for thee to conceive. I cannot well utter, what I do conceive, how shall I then be able to utter what I cannot conceive? and yet so transcendently sweet, so absolutely necessary is this high and happy Mystery, that if thou findest him not thus to be three in one, and that Blessed one (by true and lively faith) to be for ever thine, thou art lost for ever. Let us now therefore, with all humble fear, and aweful reverence, approach nearer to this blessed sight of God, that so we may with comfort and assurance, behold him to be our merciful and loving Father, and both intirely love him, and devoutly serve him with that true and filial fear that becometh his obedient children: When we have thus found him, we shall undoubtedly be found of him; by the sweet kisses of his lips (the well come visits of his gladding spirit) in this Life, and those his ravishing, and much more indeared embraces of Eternal Bliss in that to come.

Whatsoever is of infinite power to continue infinitely, must needs also be of infinite understanding, to uphold this infinite power; and

and whatſoever is of infinite underſtanding muſt alſo have an infinite object to be underſtood; otherwiſe this infinite underſtanding could not underſtand infinitely, and thereby ſhould ceaſe to be infinite; which were for it, both to be, and not to be, infinite; which reaſon knows to be impoſſible. Now ſeeing there can be no object out of God infinite, therefore this infinite ever bleſſed Object muſt be God.

Alſo where there is an infinite underſtanding, & an infinite object to be underſtood, there muſt alſo be an infinite love, for it muſt needs be, that from this infinite underſtanding of this infinitely amiable Object, there muſt needs proceed that infinite and eternal will, which infinitely and eternally both loveth and enjoyeth this its own for ever bleſſed being; for otherwiſe this infinite underſtanding ſhould not be of infinite power, to enjoy this infinite Object; and ſo ſhould both ceaſe to be infinite, and to enjoy it ſelf infinitely; and this infinite and eternal love is God.

Now becauſe this Underſtanding is infinite, this Object infinite, and this Love infinite, and that whatſoever is infinite muſt needs be God; it will from thence as neceſſarily and unavoidably follow, that this infinite Underſtanding is God, this infinite Object God, and this infinite Love God; and becauſe likewiſe it is impoſſible that there can be any more than one infinite, for then the infiniteneſs of one Being ſhould ſet bounds and limits to the infiniteneſs of the other, and ſo neither of them could be infinite; therefore it will likewiſe as truly and

un-

undeniably follow, that these three are one; One in Infiniteness, Blessedness and Eternity of Being; Three in eternal, infinite, incomprehensible existence, order or manner of Being; in this One and Eternal Essence, Three Sacred Persons, in One (and eternally but one) ever living and ever loving God, to whom be glory for ever. *Amen.*

For the farther clearing of this high and happy Mystery unto thee of this Sacred and for ever blessed Trinity in Unity, thou must here cautiously understand; that this Divine and Mysterious manner of BEING from another, inferreth another Person from another Person, but not another Essence from another Essence; so that, this infinite object understood by this infinite understanding, and this infinite Love proceeding from them both (by which mutual and eternal reflection this Divine Essence eternally injoyeth it self) can no way possible be three distinct Beings, but three manners of Being, in one and the same eternal, infinite and ever blessed Being: So that (this one eternal Essence being eternally communicable to these three existences) either of them may be truly said to be infinite in this one (and only) infinite and eternal Essence: and thus you plainly see that neither are before nor after other, because all are eternal, neither are greater nor less than other, because all are infinite, neither are bounded or limited by other, because these three in existence, are in one and the same most pure, simple and eternal Essence.

Hitherto I have led thee by the light of nature into those intricate and endless paths which

which lead thee to the knowledge of an eternal Being, wherein I hope thou haſt (both ſafely, and with ſatisfaction) ſo far walked as to behold him three in One: which is that Sacred and eternal Fountain of Love, from whence do daily flow theſe Rivulets of comforts to the ſouls and bodies of the Saints. It now remaineth that I lead thee yet farther, from this dimmer and more uncomfortable light (in which thou haſt already onely ſeen a ſmall glimpſe of what this bleſſed Being is in it ſelf) unto that greater and far more bleſſed light of grace, wherein thou mayſt behold him as he is to thee: that he is thy God, embracing thee from all eternity (in the boſome of his Bleſſed Son, by the powerful operation of his ever bleſſed Spirit) as his beloved and adopted child: this is that truly bleſſed ſight of this myſterious Trinity in Unity, which (in this thy Pilgrimage on earth) will bring true reſt and comfort to thy Soul, and ſafely guide thee to the ſweet fruition of Eternity: thou ſeeſt here darkly as in a glaſs; thou ſhalt there ſee as thou art ſeen, even face to face; the bright reflection of that ever bleſſed viſion of God ſhall be all in all unto thee: to admire him, to adore him, to love him, to enjoy him, and (in that bleſſed and eternal Son of his Love) to reſt in him for ever: unto which eternity of Bleſſedneſs the Lord in mercy bring both thee and me, and all that joyfully expect the bleſſed day of his appearing. *Amen.*

HOLY

HOLY ADMONITIONS upon the preceeding Meditations.

SEeing now that God's Being in himself is incomprehensible, his power unresistable, his will uncontroulable, his wisdom unsearchable, his wrath unavoidable, his Truth unchangeable, his judgements pronounced unalterable,& (above all) his love in Christ to his elect unutterable; with what filial fear shouldest thou think of him, with what awfulness and humblenes of soul fear to offendhim, with what holy reverence and preparedness of heart pray unto him, with what heat of affection love him, and with what joyful alacrity, holy constancy, and happy fervency, give up thy soul and body to him, to admire him, to adore him, to love him, to fear him, to honour and obey him to thy lives end?

1. Let therefore the vast Ocean of his Eternity, admonish thee to withdraw thine affections from the world and worldly delights, wherein thou canst find nothing, but emptiness and vanity, shortness and uncertainty, sinfulnes and misery; and to fix them wholly, and cheerfully, and constantly, upon heaven and heavenly enjoyments. Consider seriously what a small point of time, what a meer nothing the whole age of this world is, compared to eternity. Remember that the fashion of it passeth, and shall never return; that thy short remnant of life passeth and must shortly be no more; that thine unrepented sins, and Gods severe wrath against them, and his most righte-

ous

ous puniſhments for them ſhall never paſs but muſt remain for ever, to thy terrour here, and thy torment hereafter.

2. By the infiniteneſs of Gods being, think ſeriouſly and often, that he is much nearer to thee than thou art unto thy ſelf: That even thy very thoughts are all bare, and naked in his all ſeeing eye, who both clearly ſeeth and fully knoweth them long before. How much more then, (thinkeſt thou) thy ſinful words and wicked actions? Let this therefore admoniſh thee to ſet ſtrict watches, not only over thy lips, but over thy heart alſo, that thou offend not with thy tongue. Let thy thoughts therefore be chaſt, thy words gracious, thine actions holy; and when through frailty and infirmity of thy ſinful nature (to thy ſouls grief) thou ſhalt find them otherwiſe; let then no ſinful thought paſs thee without a penitential ſigh, no ungratious word without a ſudden retractation of it, and holy reſolution hereafter to avoid it; no wicked action defile thee without an humble confeſſion of it, true godly ſorrow for it, and an holy revenge againſt it; ſo ſhall theſe thy godly indeavours, (though full of ſinful imperfections) in Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous (who hath done all things well for thee) be both gratiouſly accepted and bleſſedly rewarded.

3. Let his Almighty Power admoniſh thee, that (if thou belong to him) thou art ſafely guarded both in Life and Death, and after Death: in Life thou haſt his holy Angels to pitch their tents about thee, that no evil ſurprize thee, *Heb.* 1, 7. in Death the Lord himſelf

ſelf is preſent with thee, to ſupport and comfort thee, *Pſal.* 23. 4. after Death, thou haſt his Powerful abſolution to diſcharge thee; *It is God that juſtifieth, who ſhall condemn? Rom.* 8. So that by thy holy truſt in this his heavenly power, thou mayſt with joy unſpeakable believe with holy *Paul, Rom.* 8. 28. that *Neither Life, nor Death, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor Depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be ever able to ſeparate thee from the Love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.*

From the Eternity of his LOVE thou mayſt with comfort conclude, that he hath loved thee in Chriſt from all Eternity, and that whom he loveth he loveth to the end, *for God is Love,* 1 *John* 4. 16. his love therefore unto his Elect, is (as he himſelf is) eternal. Let this therefore teach thee to love that God with ſincerity of heart, who hath loved thee firſt: God requireth no more of thee, for all that he hath given unto thee, than to give him thy heart: how ſweet is this yoke? how light is this burthen? bleſſed Lord, who can deny thee love? When we love thee, we love the ſafety of our ſouls and bodies in thee, and enjoy the comfort of our Beings by thee. We cannot add unto thee, who art eternally All: all therefore that thou giveſt us, all that thou requireſt of us, is to make us happy; to thee be the glory for ever. *Amen.*

Let all this now, I beſeech thee (whoſoever thou art, that by thy daring ſins, doſt bid Defiance to this Infinite, Almighty, ever Bleſſed and eternal Being) O let this time-

ly

ly admoniſh thee to ſeek the Lord while he may be found, for in the great water floods (of his Eternal wrath) when there is no more time of Repentance for ever) thou ſhalt not come nigh him, *Pſalm* 69. 15. *For if his wrath be kindled, yea but a little, bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.*

THE PRAYER.

O *Eternity, Eternity, Eternity, who ever wert, and art, and art to come, the ever bleſſed fountain of my Being, the quiet Center of my reſt, and happy end of my Deſires, how ſweet is thy remembrance to my impriſoned ſoul! O ſince I cannot comprehend thee, let me be graciouſly comprehended of thee. Let the height of thy Mercy ſwallow up the Depth of my miſery; that ſo Death may be ſwallowed up of Victory, Corruption of Immortality, and humane frailty of eternal Glory. Grant this, Dear Father, for thine Eternal love ſake in Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous.* Amen.

CHAP. III.

Of the Stupendious Love of God in our Election in Chriſt.

HAving already (as I was able) cleared unto the prophane Atheiſt that there is a God, and unto thee the Devout Chriſtian that he is three in one; and that this one God from all etern ty in Chriſt is thy God: It now followeth in order that I farther ſhew thee, that the impulſive cauſe of this thine Election, is that

that *Sola Dei* εὐδοκία, that *Dei beneplacitum*, that free good will of God, thy Creatour; and not any thing foreſeen in thee his creature, that thou thereby, even to the admiration of thy ſoul, mayſt clearly ſee the wonders of his love and favour towards thee.

Scaliger that quaint and quick-ſighted eagle in the ſearch of nature, affirmeth that Philoſophers have two Dogs to hunt out the hidden cauſes and abſtruſe originals of Nature; *Senſe* and *Reaſon*: Let Senſe and Reaſon play their parts in Naturals; this ſearch is holy, and admitteth not of any thing unholy to diſcourſe it: Even the very wiſeſt of men in their pure naturals, are not able to diſcover even the very leaſt of theſe Divine Wonders: He that humbly deſires to go into God by this holy enquiry, muſt firſt go out of himſelf; there is no ſafe way to him but by him, even by that ſacred word of his which cannot erre. Let us therefore caſt down every high imagination, and every ſtrong hold of ſenſe and reaſon, leſt we hear that meretricious judgement of the Harlot, 1 *King.* 3. Let our eternal Election be neither attributed to God alone, nor to foreſeen faith alone, but let it be divided.

In his name therefore, and in his holy fear, by the ſafe conduct of his holy word, I humbly enter on this Sacred ſearch, which fleſh and bloud cannot reveal unto me, *Matth.* 16. 10. Lord guide me in it that my footſteps ſlip not, that thou mayſt have the glory, and thine the good of theſe my weak indeavours.

Before we enter on this high and happy ſearch of our Election, it is needful that we firſt

firſt conſider of the ſtate of Man in his Creation, and this we ſhall find to be mutable, for God gave unto him (as the School-men ſpeak) a *Poſſe non mori*, but not a *Non poſſe mori*; He had indeed a poſſibility that he might not die, but he had not a poſſibility, that he could not die: and thus man in his integrity having free will either to ſtand or fall, it had undoubtedly been moſt juſt with God, when he was fallen, ſo to have left him, and for ever to have had no mercy on him: Now foraſmuch as all of us have ſinned in *Adam*, and are ſo become guilty before God of that bitter curſe, and ſo of Eternal Death, God can no way poſſible be thought to do wrong unto any, if it had pleaſed him eternally to forſake all, who in *Adam* had thus forſaken the Eternal God; ſeeing as the Apoſtle tells us, *Rom.* 3. 19. That *all the world is guilty before God*, and that *the wages of ſin is Death*, Rom. 6. 27.

Now God from all eternity compaſſionately (in Chriſt) beholding the whole maſs of mankind thus fallen into ſin and miſery, and thereby alſo finding out a gracious opportunity to manifeſt the greatneſs of his power, the depth of his wiſdom, the extent of his goodneſs, and the richneſs of his Mercy in doing good to his Creature, out of all this corrupt maſs of Mankind, thus willfully fallen by their own fault, out of his own free good will and pleaſure, without the leaſt motive without himſelf, hath choſen unto himſelf, in Chriſt, a ſet number, equally miſerable with others, to be his adopted children, and thereby partakers of grace, and inheriters of Glory: Of which number

number none can ever possibly be lost, or diminished; of which we have a most gracious and a full assurance from his own lips, who hath laid down his life for us. *Lo here am I* (saith he) *and the children whom thou hast given me, Heb.* 2. 13. and upon *Peters* confessing of him to be Christ the Son of the living God, he saith, *Matth.* 16. 18. *Upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it:* And that we were thus graciously elected out of this corrupt Mass of misery, is clearly proved by the Apostle S. *Paul*, Rom. 9. 22. *What if God would, to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, suffer* (*with long patience*) *the vessels prepared to destruction; and that he might declare the riches of his Glory upon the vessels of Mercy, which he hath prepared unto Glory?* And that nothing may be wanting for the clearing of this Sacred truth, you have the words of God himself to prove it, cited by his holy Apostle, *Rom.* 9. 11. *Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated*: Now seeing it is impossible for God to hate his creature which he looks upon as pure and without sin, and that God is said to love the one and hate the other, before they had done either good or evil, from thence therefore it must needs follow that they were both equally miserable in the state of corruption, but by his free and eternal Election the one was taken and the other left.

Let us not now here presumptuously enquire into the deep secrets of Gods eternal counsels, in asking why God, from amongst this corrupt mass of mankind, hath chosen some and rejected others; but let it much rather

ther content us, that we know it ſo to be by his good will and pleaſure; which being eternally holy, juſt and good, yea even holineſs, juſtice and goodneſs it ſelf, it is impoſſible that any thing evil or unjuſt can proceed from it: if this be not enough to take thee off from this bold and ſinful enquiry, let S. *Pauls* Queſtion anſwer thee; *who art thou O man that diſputeſt with thy maker?* Let us all therefore here rather content our ſelves with the Apoſtle in knowing aſſuredly and with comfort that it is ſo, than curiouſly to ſearch into the hidden myſteries of Gods Sacred decrees, which are neither allowed to be ſeen nor poſſible to be uttered.

Having thus already made it manifeſt unto thee by unqueſtionable texts of Scripture that the onely impulſive cauſe of our Election, is that free good will of God; let us now ſee whether there may poſſibly be found any outward cauſe in the creature which may any way move God the Creatour, to elect ſome and reject others: for the clearing whereof let us hear what S. *Paul* ſaith, *Epheſ.* 1. 5. *who hath choſen us in Chriſt from all eternity*: Now if from all eternity we are choſen in Chriſt, it will from thence neceſſarily follow that nothing out of Chriſt can be the cauſe of our Election; and from hence it is that God himſelf (to clear this Sacred truth) ſaith of himſelf, *Exod.* 33. 19. *Miſerebor cujus miſertus fuero, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*: well therefore might the Apoſtle from thence infer, *Rom.* 9. 15. *It is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that ſheweth mercy.*

cy. Verum ait nihil verius. Let God be true and every one that oppoſeth him a liar: He hath affirmed it, that thine Election is both in, and freely, and only, and eternally of himſelf, and his holy Apoſtle, as his witneſs, hath confirmed it: He therefore that (aſſuming any thing foreſeen in himſelf) requires a louder voice to prove it, muſt expect it from heaven in thunder at the Judgement of the great day; when the ſtraw and ſtubble of mans ſinful foreſeen Righteouſneſs ſhall be conſumed, and Gods ſacred and eternal truth, in his free, and only electing of us in Chriſt ſhall ſtand for ever.

Let us yet farther conſider of the final end of our election, and we ſhall find that, as the Apoſtle tells us *Epheſ.* 1. 9. to be *To the glory of his grace: for of him and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever*: Now if our election were not wholly from Grace, then his glory ſhould be imperfect, as having ſomewhat elſe (foreſeen in us) added to it whereby it ſhould become perfect; but ſeeing all Gods attributes (although to us divers) are in him, one and the ſame ever bleſſed Eſſence, unto which (being infinite in glory) it is impoſſible any thing of worthineſs in us foreſeen can be added; it muſt from thence ſtill follow that nothing *ab extra*, or from without, could be the cauſe of our Election. From whence S. *Paul* in holy admiration of this ſtupendious love of God, is forced to cry out, O the height of the riches of the knowledge and love of God! with him therefore what we cannot ſufficiently admire, let us all moſt humbly adore, and tremble at the very thought of

concei-

conceiving any thing foreseen in us (even in the very best of us) to be the cause of this our election in Christ, lest thereby we are found fighters against God in diminishing his glory, and thereby augmenting our own endless misery.

Hitherto having only indeavoured to prove in general that nothing *ab extra* or from without, foreseen in us can be the cause of our election, it now remaineth that I descend to some particulars by way of reasons, for the confirmation of this Sacred truth: that so all those, who are yet in darkness and so become mistaken enemies unto Christ and his true Church, may thereby clearly and timely see, to go out of themselves (their own foreseen righteousness) into that free grace and perfect love of God to man in Christ; in which alone, we are both freely and eternally elected.

In the first place thou mayst consider that if thou makest any thing out of God the cause of thine election thou art repugnant even to his Divine Essence, who is *Primum Ens* the first Being, and can have nothing either before him, or out of him, any way to move him unto Mercy. Now seeing Gods eternal Decree is one and the same with his eternal Essence (which sound Divinity affirmeth) if the Decree of our Election shall depend upon any outward condition whatsoever to be performed by man, then should the will of God (which is God) have somewhat before it, which was eternally first, to move it to our Election: But this (even unto Reason) is impossible to be; there-

fore the free good will of God muſt needs be the cauſe of our Election.

Conſider next that God (who cannot lie) hath ſaid, *Iſaiah* 42. *My glory I will not give to another.* Now whatſoever out of God ſhall be a cauſe of Mans happineſs, muſt of neceſſity deprive God of his glory, and confer it on the creature; which is not only ſinful but blaſphemous to affirm.

Thirdly, if any thing out of God ſhall be the cauſe of our election, what then ſhall become of thoſe infants of the faithful, whoſe deaths are not much diſtant from their entrance into life, and in whoſe actions nothing could be foreſeen, to be the cauſe of their election? But inſomuch as the ſouls of theſe innocents are received into glory, as Chriſt himſelf affirmeth, *Matth.* 18. 4. therefore our election is only of God.

Fourthly, God (being the onely and the chiefeſt good) could not poſſibly ſee any thing out of himſelf which might move him unto good; for it is impoſſible that any thing finite ſhould be an object to God that is infinite: for if any created Being could be the true and proper cauſe to move God to any Divine Act, then ſhould there be ſomewhat in God both leſs and after this created Being; which neither right reaſon will admit nor Faith can believe.

It now onely remaineth, that we take a particular view of thoſe falſe and fictitious cauſes which our Adverſaries of *Rome*, the enemies to truth, indeavour to obtrude upon us, that we may hereby learn, both carefully to avoid,

avoid, and also pity and direct those much mistaken souls, that are seduced by them.

The first of these alledged for a cause is the foreseen good use of Mans free-will, which we can no way yield to be a cause of mans Election: First, because we find the Apostle S. *Paul* in the place before mentioned, *Rom.* 9. 16. to put the mercy of God in direct opposition to the free-will and performance of man. *It is not therefore in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy*: from whence it must follow even by the Apostles inference, that whatsoever is given to man in this blessed work of Election is taken from God. Secondly, if our Election be conditional (as of absolute necessity it must, if depending upon mans will) it is also uncertain, and so also most uncomfortable; but (to the sweet refreshment of the souls of all that are in Christ) it is most certain, sure and Eternal, as is the Essence and therein the power, wisdom, will and love of God himself: as you have it most comfortably proved by his holy Apostle, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. in these words, *The foundation of the Lord standeth sure and hath this seal: the Lord knoweth who are his*; every individual person of the Church of Christ is known unto him, kept safely by him, and shall hereafter be a glorious partaker with him.

A second suppositious and false cause of our Election is foreseen Faith. Now the fruit or effect of our Election can no way possible be the cause of it; but that faith is the fruit of our Election is most apparent by that of the Apostle, *Acts* 13. 48. *As many as were ordained unto eternal*

nal life believed: Lo here the bleſſed fountain of our Faith, we believe becauſe we were ordained to believe; we were not therefore ordained becauſe we were foreſeen to believe: So that now we plainly ſee our faith to be ſo far from being the cauſe, that it is only the pre-ordained means conducing to the bleſſed end, the ſaving of our ſouls: as is farther proved by the ſame Apoſtle, *Epheſ.* 1. 4. *He hath choſen us that we ſhould be holy*: not that we are either ſo, or from eternity were ſo foreſeen to be: Faith therefore is a condition abſolutely prerequiſite as the means, but no way forerequiſite as the cauſe.

A third, and laſt, is that of works, which hath already been removed by that of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 9. *Before the children had done good or evil* (that is, before they were indued with any quality to put a difference between them) *Jacob have I loved and Eſau have I hated*; ſo that (as the Apoſtle hath moſt truly told us) it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that worketh, but in God that calleth; and if our election be in God that calleth, how then is it (or can it be) in him that is called, or in any thing of works belonging to him?

Now if it ſhall be here farther objected, that either all or any one of theſe falſe cauſes were from all eternity both foreſeen and accepted in Chriſt as cauſes of our election (which are indeed ſo accepted as the means ordained to ſalvation) I am here bold farther to affirm for ſacred and undeniable truth, that even Chriſt himſelf, with all his merits, is not the

the impulſive cauſe of our election: Neither is here ought taken away or in the leaſt diminiſhed from the great glory either of his Name or Office: Seeing the queſtion is not here touching the meritorious cauſe of our ſalvation; (which we all with joyfulneſs and thankfulneſs of heart acknowledge Chriſt to be) but about the cauſe of God's Decree of Election: Which bleſſed and eternal Decree ordains even Chriſt himſelf (as Mediatour) to be elected, and the head of the Elect, and the foundation or chief corner ſtone, on which the bleſſed execution of God's Decree in our Election muſt ſtand for ever; and therefore it is moſt truly affirmed by S. *Paul, Epheſ.* 1. 4. that we are elected *in Chriſto* (*non propter Chriſtum*) in Chriſt, not for Chriſt. So that although it may be truly ſaid, that God from all eternity decreed to ſave man for the merits of Chriſt, yet it cannot be ſo truly ſaid, that for Chriſt's merit he decreed man's ſalvation. For ſalvation is one thing and the decree of ſalvation another; and as the things, ſo the cauſes of either are different. And thus you ſee the love of the Father to preceed (in order) the miſſion of the Son. The Elect likewiſe are ſaid even by Chriſt himſelf to be given unto him, *John* 17. They cannot therefore be ſaid to be elected by his merit.

Thus you may plainly and with comfort ſee, that although Faith alone (being lively by works) be truly ſaid to pleaſe God in the ſtate of Juſtification, yet this faith (eternally foreſeen) cannot pleaſe God in the ſtate of Election; in which eternal ſtate the bleſſed

will of God alone, is both pleasing and well pleasing to him: So that faith with the fruit thereof, good works, with whatsoever else is falsly brought to be the cause of our Election, except that only and for ever blessed εὐδοκία, that free good will of God, let it be esteem'd as dross and dung, in comparison of the inestimable richness of this free love of God in Christ Jesus, and as most injurious to God's glory, and most pernicious to the souls of all that are deceived by it.

Upon this sure and eternal foundation of our free Election in Christ, is built that blessed structure of our Vocation, Providential preservation, Justification, Sanctification, in this life, and assured hopes of Glorification in the life to come; for as S. *Paul* tells thee, *Rom.* 8. 3. *Whom he hath predestinated them also he hath called, and whom he hath called them also he hath justified, and whom he hath justified them also he will glorifie.* This is that golden chain that reaches from eternity to eternity, from glory without beginning unto glory without end; unto which glory the Lord (who hath thus freely loved us) bring us, for that love sake in him, who hath laid down his life for us. *Amen.*

Pious ADMONITIONS upon the preceding Meditations.

SEeing these things are thus, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holiness, and strictness of our lives and conversations? how meek and lowly in our spirits? who have nothing

nothing but what we have received: how inflam'd in our affections? with love to this our good and gracious God, who hath loved us from all eternity: how zealous in our Actions, to promote his glory, who hath made us (sinful and polluted creatures) partakers of eternal glory with him? and how carefully diligent to make our callings and elections sure, before we go hence and are no more seen? Our whole lives are too little for this blessed work, let us all therefore set upon it timely and seriously while it is called to day, the blessed day of grace; while there is yet opportunity of working out our salvation with fear and trembling (with fear, lest we are not within the number of the elect; with trembling, lest not finding a comfortable assurance of our election (by dying unto sin and living unto Righteousness) we are lost for ever.) This is that happy means (eternally decreed) conducing to this blessed end, without which we can neither have peace in our lives, nor comfort in our deaths.

Let this therefore farther admonish thee, whosoever thou art, that yet livest and delightest in any known sin, to break it off by true and timely repentance. Be not deceived, God is not mocked; it is not thy lame serving of him that can give thee the least assurance of thine Election in Christ: if thou presumest too much upon his mercy, thou mayst well fear to feel the rigour of his justice. God is a spirit, and will be loved and delighted in with spiritual embraces. If therefore thou livest to the flesh thou shalt die, but

if by the blessed motions of God's holy Spirit in thee thou mortifie the deeds of the flesh thou shalt live. Let this therefore put thee upon earnest and importunate prayer to Almighty God, of carnal to make thee wholly spiritual; that thou mayst thereby be truly humbled for thy sins past, have a perfect hatred against all sin for the time to come, attain unto happy holiness, and gracious perseverance; by all which, and God's gracious acceptance of them in Christ, (by whose only perfection all thine imperfections shall be done away) thou mayst have full and safe assurance, that thy name is written in the book of life.

O wrest not therefore this his Sacred Decree unto thine own endless destruction both of body and soul, in carelesly affirming that thou canst not alter God's Decree, and therefore mayst live as thou wilt; but ever gratiously remember that as thou canst not alter his Decree, so neither canst thou alter the appointed means eternally decreed unto the end: If therefore thou livest not holily, (the predestinated means to die happily) to the terrour of thy conscience thou mayst well fear, that thou art not of this blessed number of the Elect, but of that unhappy one of those, whom God (with patience and long suffering) leaves unto themselves in this life, that they may be vessels of his wrath and fury in the life to come. From which the Lord in mercy timely defend us for Jesus Christ his sake the Righteous.

PRAYER.

PRAYER.

O Thou blessed and eternal Love, and free lover of mankind, in that blessed Son of thy love Christ Jesus, who art holiness it self, and hast therefore eternally elected us unto holiness, that by this blessed means ordained to that blessed end, the saving of our pretious souls, we might at last be made partakers of thine own holiness, and thereby injoy thee in eternal happiness: vouchsafe we humbly beseech thee, (by the blessed working of thy holy Spirit in us) so safely to direct and guide us, that, by our mortification to sin, Regeneration to righteousness, Sanctification to Holiness, Gratious perseverance in all, and thy blessed acceptance of all, in and through the merits and perfections of thy blessed Son, we may have a full and safe assurance of our Election in him, that so we may syncerely and intirely love thee, faithfully serve thee, humbly adore thee and eternally enjoy thee: grant this dear Lord for Jesus sake the Righteous. Amen.

CHAP. IV.

Of the ineffable love of God unto man in the Hypostatical union.

WHen *Moses* (the meekest of God's servants) desired to see the face of God, the Lord told him, that he could not see his face and live, *Exod.* 33. 20. To see God out of Christ, who is light inaccessible and terrour unutterable, is to see destruction to

our bodies and amazement to our ſouls: Now God (who is infinitely good) from all eternity, decreeing to communicate himſelf unto his creature, and eternally foreſeeing that the moſt righteous man alive could not behold him as he is and live; ſuch was his ſtupendious and immenſe love unto man, that he was gratiouſly pleaſed to find out a way for us to behold him both ſafely and comfortably in his only and beloved Son Chriſt Jeſus, the ſecond Perſon in the ſacred and myſterious Trinity; that ever bleſſed and eternal word, who when the fulneſs of time was come, was made fleſh for us, as you have it, *John* 1. 14. This was that glad tidings of great joy, which the holy Angels brought unto the Shepherds; and this is that myſterious and unutterable love of God unto man: Whereby the earneſt deſire of my ſoul is to bring that unvaluable peace and comfort to the ſouls of his Elect, which this tranſitory ſinful world can neither give unto them, nor ſhall be ever able to take away from them; even that bleſſed peace of God, which paſſeth all our underſtanding.

This (I confeſs) is a theam too large for all the tongues of men and Angels to dilate upon; this is a myſtery ſo high, that even thoſe bleſſed Spirits are exceedingly delighted to behold it; ſo great and glorious, that they humbly proſtrate their Divine natures to adore it; and yet ſo abſolutely needful to be known, that without it we can know nothing but to know our ſelves eternally wretched: In all awful reverence therefore to this ſacred and myſterious union I humbly begin this my diſcourſe with

with him who is both without beginning and without end, that *Alpha* and *Omega*, that first and last, who saith of himself, *Revel.* 1. 18. *I am alive but was dead, and behold I live for evermore, and have the keys of death and of hell*; even that blessed Lamb slain from all eternity for the sakes of the Elect.

First, then for the better unfolding of this sacred Mystery, we are not to conceive this sacred Word, which was made flesh for us, to be that word which was spoken in the beginning of time, when the world was created; for that was joyntly spoken by all the three Persons in the Sacred Trinity, for *Omnia opera Trinitatis quoad extra sunt indivisa*: all the outward works of the Trinity are undivided. But this sacred word which was made flesh, was that eternal word which S. *John* tells us, *John* 1. 1. was both eternally with God and eternally was God: even that eternal, infinite, incomprehensible word, that only eternally begotten Son of God, the wisdom of the Father, the express image of his Person, by whom the world was made, and by whom the world hereafter shall be judged; eternally injoying blessedness in his own Essence, and yet in time most gratiously communicating happiness to us his creatures.

Now because upon the sure foundation of this Sacred union is built the blessed hope of our eternal happiness, and unto it as to the blessed fountain of our comforts must run the current of our praises in this life, and of our *Allelujahs* in the Life to come: I think it needful before I make a farther search into the re-

vealed secrets of this sacred mystery, to remove some few Objections which the profess'd enemies of the Church of God have brought against this sacred, and soul-satisfying truth; that we may thereby be able to afford our selves comfort, in the sure foundation of that blessed corner stone, which these wicked Builders have refused.

Their first Objection is this.

When the Son, the second Person in the Trinity, was begotten, either he was, or he was not; if he was, how can he then be said to be begotten? if he was not, then is he not eternal, and if not eternal then he is not God.

This argument may seem to be of force, and to invade, and undermine the very being and the firm foundation of our Christian comfort; for if the word, the second person in the sacred Trinity, be not truly and eternally God, *then* (as S. *Paul* saith) *is our Faith vain*, and *we are yet in our sins*, & *are of all men most miserable*: it behoves us therefore to be furnished with such answers as may enable us to defend our selves against the subtilties of our malitious enemies, that so we may thereby bring glory unto God, Peace to his Church, and comfort to our own souls.

Answ. In answer therefore unto this Objection you must understand, that this begetting is eternal; but in the first proposition, either he was, or he was not, is included the determination of time, so that what is agreeable to be spoken of this generation as to eternity, is no way agreeable to be spoken of it as to the limits of time; and therefore we may truly

answer

anſwer that as to the bounds and limits of time he neither was, nor was not, becauſe he was eternal; (that is) that he who is infinite cannot be ſaid to be within the limits of that which is finite: for in Eternity time cannot be ſaid to be exiſtent, becauſe there can be nothing more nor leſs than that which is perfect.

Object. 2. A ſecond not much unlike the former is this. Either the Son is always begotten, or elſe ſometime he ceaſeth to be begotten; If he always is begotten he never attaineth to perfection, and if he ceaſeth to be begotten then muſt there follow a change in God from being to not being: Therefore either there is no ſecond Perſon in the Trinity, or elſe this ſecond Perſon is not God.

Anſw. For anſwer unto this, here you muſt again remember, that theſe words always and ſometime imply thoſe limits of time which cannot be admitted in Eternity; and therefore the anſwer is again moſt truly given; that the Son is neither always begotten, nor ſometime ceaſeth to be begotten, becauſe his generation is Eternal.

Object. 3. I ſhall trouble you but with one Objection more and that ſuppos'd to be invincible, which is this that followeth. The only true God is called upon by a Mediatour, but neither the Son nor the holy Ghoſt are invoked by a Mediatour, therefore neither the Son nor the holy Ghoſt are the onely true God.

Anſw. In anſwer unto this we muſt warily diſtinguiſh of the word, *invoked* or *called upon*, and this we ſhall find to be two fold, the firſt abſolute,

absolute, the second relative; that which is absolute is directed to the Essence of God absolutely, and this absolute Invocation undoubtedly as well belongeth to the Son and to the holy Ghost as to the Father; so that in respect of this absolute invocation, all the three Persons being one and the same eternal Essence, are invoked by a Mediatour: That which is relative is invocation directed to the existence or the manner of being of this one Essence; and so to be invocated by a Mediatour relateth first in order unto God the Father, by whom the Son is eternally begotten to be the blessed Mediatour between God and man. And thus you plainly see, that the three persons who are equal in Essence, may be unlike in office, and so the mission of the Father in sending, and the obedience of the Son in being sent, takes not away or diminisheth either the power or essence of the Son: so that although what the Son speaketh as a Mediatour, must refer wholly to the Father; yet, what is spoken out of his office of Mediatourship, is as truly relating to himself and to the holy Ghost as to the Father; as to that one and the same Eternal ever blessed Essence.

Having thus briefly (and I hope fully) answered those objections which have brought much trouble and disturbance to the peace and quiet of the Church of Christ; Let us now with cheerfulness and joy, go on to those enquiries of this Sacred and substantial union, that bring us everlasting rest and comfort to our weary souls.

Hitherto we have onely seen but a small glimpse

glimpse of the transcendent glory of this eternal word, the blessed Son of God, as it standeth to the sacred and mysterious Trinity of Persons in unity of Essence, God blessed for ever: I am now come to shew you the great and gratious manifestation of it unto man, by the more than wonderful uniting of the two natures the Divine & humane in one Person the man Christ Jesus; to whom with humbleness & thankfulness of hearts, we duly owe our souls & bodies as a living sacrifice, to love him, to serve him, to honour him, to adore him both now and for ever. Who for our sakes and for our sins came down from heaven to take our nature upon him, and (who knew not sin) to be made sin for us, that we might be made righteousness in him, and thereby to satisfie his Fathers wrath for us, and for ever to reconcile his mercy to us. This is that blessed union, that mysterious connection, that stupendious condescention of the Divine nature to the humane, by which we are for ever truly comforted.

O most wonderful condescention of the sacred Deity, well worthy of astonishment, of admiration! what imagination can conceive it? what understanding fathom it? what tongue of men or Angels utter it? how then shall I be able to unfold it? O thou blessed Saviour of lost man who hast given thy self unto me, be now present with me, so to direct and guide me in this blessed search, that I may safely and comfortably see so much of thee, as may bring glory unto thee, comfort unto thine, and rest to mine own Soul.

This

This is that ſtupendious wonder of wonders, at which the holy Angels themſelves ſtand amazed, at which the Devils tremble, and without which, the ſouls and bodies of the Saints are of all men moſt miſerable: The creation of all things out of nothing, the diſſolution of this firſt creation, when the Heavens ſhall be wrapt up as a ſcrowl, the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the Earth with all the ſinful works thereof ſhall be burn'd up, the graves ſhall open and give up their dead, and the general reſtoration of all theſe ſhall be immediately preceeding the everlaſting Sabbath: All theſe, although they are indeed the works of wonder, yet muſt all give place to this, as to the wonder of wonders: For in the creation of all things out of nothing, as there was no pre-exiſting matter to help, ſo alſo there was none to hinder; and in their diſſolution and reſtoration, being now by God's Almighty power already an exiſting matter, pliable to be wrought upon and capable of no reſiſtance, they are as clay in the hands of the Potter to faſhion them to what form and mould it pleaſeth him: But in this wonderful union between God and man, here is not only the creation of a new thing in the earth, as the holy Prophet *Jeremiah* tells us, *Jer.* 31. 22. *The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, Behold a* WOMAN *ſhall compaſs a Man*; but here is alſo a Diametrical oppoſition of the Agent and the Patient, the omnipotent, wiſe, infinite, holy and eternal God the creatour, and the ſtreight womb of the Virgin, a weak, ſinful, finite, mortal creature.

That

That the Son of God ſhould be made of a woman, as we have it confirmed, *Gal.* 4. 4. even of that Woman that was made by himſelf; that her womb which is finite, ſhould incloſe him who is infinite, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, becauſe he containeth all things; that he who had both Father and Mother, whoſe Pedegree is upon record even unto *Adam*, as is proved, *Matthew* the firſt, who in the fulneſs of time was brought forth in *Bethlehem*, and when he had finiſhed his courſe was cut off from the land of the living: That he, notwithſtanding all this, ſhould be truly that in ſubſtance, which *Melchiſedeck* was only in ſhew, without Father, without Mother, without Pedegree, having neither beginning of Days, nor end of Life; that although he were without Father, yet his Father ſhould be greater than he, as we have it, *John* 14. 28. and yet he his Fathers equal, 5. 18. and laſtly, that he who was *David's* Son ſhould yet be *David's* Lord, as we have it, *Matth.* 22. 42, 43. that he ſhould be truly all this without the leaſt diminution of the Divine, or augmentation of the humane nature, is a great wonder indeed, even the very greateſt of the great works of God. And yet notwithſtanding all theſe contrarieties and (unto man) impoſſibilities, oppoſitions and contradictions, ſuch is the immenſe wiſdom and love of God, that when the fulneſs of that time was come, which from all Eternity was Decreed to be; for man's ſake, & for man's Eternal comfort, he ſent his Son into the world to be made fleſh for us, *that whoſoever believed in him*

ſhould

ſhould not periſh but have everlaſting life, John 3. 16.

For the farther opening of this Sacred and myſterious truth, which put the bleſſed Angels into admiration, the Devils to a *Non plus*, and the whole frame of nature to aſtoniſhment, you are here to conſider, that as you had before in the ſacred and eternal Trinity, three Perſons in one Eſſence; ſo you have here two natures in one Perſon, God and man in one Chriſt: ſo that by reaſon of the ſtrictneſs of this perſonal union, whatſoever may be verified of either of theſe natures, the ſame may be truly ſpoken of the whole Perſon, that is, of God and man, one Chriſt, from which of either of theſe two natures it hath its denomination. For the clearer underſtanding whereof, let us call to mind what the Apoſtle telleth us touching Chriſt, *Col.* 2. 9. *In him dwelleth the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*; That is, in his perſon, as God-man, and not in his nature as man only; by which perſonal, and real union, the infinite Deity is moſt firmly and eternally united to the finite humanity, in the true unity of one and the ſelf-ſame individual Perſon.

That you may yet a little more fully and clearly apprehend the true and holy meaning of this ſacred truth, take along with you his own words, both by way of illuſtration and of confirmation of the ſtrictneſs of this bleſſed union in his own myſterious Perſon, *John* 8. 58. *Before Abraham was* (ſaith he) *I am*; where you have that which is only proper to the Divinity referred to the humanity in one

and

and the ſame individual Perſon, Chriſt Jeſus: and *Acts* 20. 28. you have a farther confirmation of it, where it is ſaid, The bloud of God cleanſeth us from all iniquity; where you have that which is only proper to the humanity referred to the *Divinity*, in that inſeparable union of one and the ſame Perſon: And as you have had in the two preceeding texts either of the diſtinct natures truly attributed to the other ſeparately and diſtinctly, the *Divine* to the humane, and the humane to the *Divine*, in the true, bleſſed, and inſeparable unity of the ſame perſon: So you have likewiſe, *John* 1.14. both the natures joyntly (but not mixedly) attributed to the ſame Perſon, where he tells you, That *the word was made Fleſh*.

And here leſt we ſhould miſtake the manner of this wonderful Conjunction of the two natures in unity of the ſame Perſon, we muſt warily conſider that the *Divine* nature did not aſſume the humane perſon, but the *Divine* Perſon did aſſume the humane nature; for if the three Perſons in unity of Eſſence had been made fleſh, and the fulneſs of the Godhead had ſo dwelt in the Perſon Chriſt Jeſus bodily; there ſhould then have been a fourth perſon added to the Godhead, and ſo the Trinity of Perſons in unity of Eſſence muſt have been augmented; which was impoſſible. For, unto perfection it ſelf nothing can be added to make it more perfect. And if either the Father, the firſt Perſon, or the holy Ghoſt the third, had been made fleſh, then ſhould there have been two Sons in the ſacred Trinity; therefore it was abſolutely needful, that this *Divine* Per-

Person which assumed the humane nature, should be the second Person in the sacred Trinity, that so the Son of God might be the Son of Man, (and so our Saviour terms himself) and both of them but one and the same person; that so being but one Son, there should not be addition to the sacred Trinity.

Now as this was absolutely necessary in respect of God, so was it likewise in respect of Man, that we thereby might joyfully be made the Sons of God, not by hereditary right, but by Adoption; and this is that which S. *Paul* teacheth us, *Gal.* 4. 4, 5, & 7, verses; *God sent his Son made of a woman, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons*, whereupon he farther giveth us this comfortable assurance in the verses following, *Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a Son, and if a Son then* (also) *an heir of God through Christ*: whereby (to the most unspeakable comfort of all the Elect) we may both safely and joyfully assure our selves, that what interest and relation Christ himself hath, both in and unto God by nature, the very same we have by grace; onely with this difference, that we receive, *ad modum recipientis*, that is, according to the capacity and extent of our vessel receiving; And this also S. *John* confirms unto us in these words, *John* 1. 12. *As many as received him, to them he gave power to be the Sons of God, even unto them that believe on his name*; and that nothing might be wanting to assure us of this blessed truth, we have the blessed words of Christ himself to confirm it, *John* 17. 24. *Father* (saith he) *I will that those which thou hast given me be with me, even where*

where I am, that they may behold that my glory which thou haſt given me: So that although Chriſt be the firſt born amongſt many brethren by nature, as we have it, *Rom.* 8. 20. yet we, even we alſo, by this grace of adoption, are accounted his firſt born. So God biddeth *Moſes* ſpeak unto *Pharaoh*, *Exod.* 4. 22. *Iſrael is my ſon, even my firſt born*, and ſo *Heb.* 12. 23. the whole Iſrael of God conſiſting both of Jew and Gentile is declared there to be, *The general aſſembly of the Church of the firſt born inrolled in heaven*; and thus you ſee how in reſpect of man alſo, that the word, the ſecond ſacred Perſon in the Trinity, was made fleſh.

It will not be here amiſs if we conſider yet ſomewhat farther of the nature aſſumed, that ſo unto our endleſs comforts we may know him to be both perfect God, a bleſſed and eternal being; and perfect man, of an humane body and reaſonable ſoul ſubſiſting: Now for the better clearing hereof we are to conſider, that the word *fleſh* in Scripture is taken in a various acceptation; ſometimes for the body of man diſtinct from the ſoul, as in 1 Cor. 15. 39. *All fleſh is not the ſame fleſh, for there is one fleſh of beaſts*, &c. ſometimes for the unregenerate man, as *Rom.* 8. 13. *If ye walk after the fleſh ye ſhall die*, &c. and ſometimes for the whole nature of man both ſoul and body in the ſtate of regeneration, as we have it from S. *Paul* ſpeaking of himſelf, *Rom.* 7. 5. *For I know that in me that is in my fleſh dwelleth no good thing*; and ſometimes for the whole nature of man in the ſtate of perfection, in which ſence only it is that Chriſt took our nature upon him; as we have

have it, *Heb.* 2. 17. He was made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted. If it shall here now be demanded how he could be made flesh without sin, seeing that according to his flesh he came of the seed of *Abraham*, as we have it, *Heb.* 2. 16. of the seed of *David*, as in *Rom.* 1. 3. of the seed of the Woman, as in *Gen.* 3. 16. who all of them (the blessed Virgin her self not excepted) were born in Original sin?

For answer hereunto we are to understand that Original sin can no way be propagated unto mankind but by that act of common generation whereby the race of mankind is continued: now seeing that Christ as he was God had no Mother, and as he was Man had no Father as to this common Act of generation, and so became the fruit of the womb and not the fruit of the Loins, therefore it was utterly impossible that this holy thing which should be born of her should contract any thing of sin from that immaculate womb which knew not man and was sanctified by God.

Let us not here too curiously enquire how this can be, this being a search far fitter for an Angelical nature, than for sinful dust & ashes; but here let the holy Angels Answer to the blessed Virgin be fully satisfactory to us, that the Power of the most high should overshadow her, unto whom nothing is impossible. Let us therefore faithfully and joyfully believe, that as the distinction of persons in the holy Trinity hinders not the unity of the Godhead, although every Person intirely holdeth his own incommunicable property: So neither doth the distinction of the two natures in Christ our blessed Saviour,

Saviour, any way croſs, hinder or confound the unity of his Perſon, although each nature remaineth intire in it ſelf, and moſt fully and compleatly retaineth the diſtinct properties agreeing thereunto without the leaſt thought or poſſibility of converſion, compoſition, commixtion or confuſion. But let this only and alone, both fully and for ever ſuffice us, that we (with admiration) ſee, to our ſouls exceeding comfort, our humane nature exalted far above the nature of Angels; aſſumed into the undivided unity of God's own perſon, and admitted there to dwell to all eternity: In whoſe bleſſed Perſon we alſo who are his brethren, and ſo the Sons of God by adoption, are not only heirs of God, as the Apoſtle tells us, *Rom.* 8. 17. but joynt heirs with Chriſt, to rule and reign with him for ever. And for this bleſſed exaltation of man's ſinful nature eſpecially it was, that the Son of God was made the Son of Man, even Chriſt Jeſus the Righteous, to whom be all glory, honour, praiſe, dominion and thankſgiving, with all humble Adoration both now and for ever. *Amen.*

As we have conſidered Chriſt in his Perſon, it now concerns us yet farther to conſider of him in his office, and that is his Mediatourſhip between God and man: and here we ſhall find it abſolutely neceſſary, that he who was to reconcile both natures, muſt likewiſe be partaker of them both, that ſo what was impoſſible to the nature of Man, as finite, might be performed by the Perſon of Chriſt as infinite; by whoſe active and paſſive obedience, we are now (from being enemies to God and ſo the chil-

of wrath) became the sons children of peace, as the Apostle assureth us, *Ephes.* 2. 14. in these words, *For he is our Peace, who hath made of both one, and hath broken down the partition wall*; From hence also is that most affectionate expression of our blessed Saviour, *Joh.* 20. 17. *Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and unto my God and your God*: Now if Christ be not ashamed to call us brethren, God will not be ashamed to own us as his children: and thus we see (to our unspeakable comforts) that the exaltation of man's nature was from all eternity decreed by the Mediatourship of Christ; and by him fulfilled, when he took our nature upon him, and gave himself up to Death, as a propitiatory sacrifice for us, and a full and sufficient ransome for our sins, to appease his Fathers wrath, to satisfie his justice for us, and for ever reconcile his mercy to us: to whom be glory for ever.

From hence it is that S. *Paul* makes his universal challenge both to men and Devils, *Rom.* 8. 32, 33. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God making intercession for us.* O blessed Redeemer, how sweet is this thy mercy unto me a wretched and polluted sinner? thou hatest and abhorrest sin in me, thou hast shed thy pretious bloud to take away the punishment of sin from me; and notwithstanding I still daily and hourly commit sin against thee, thou still graciously intercedest for me; blessed and for ever blessed be thy holy name, and let all those that

that love thee, the Lord and giver of life eternal, depart from their ſins and ſay, *Amen, Amen.*

PIOUS ADMONITIONS

Upon the preceding Meditations.

1. LEt theſe ſtupendious wonders in the Incarnation of Chriſt, admoniſh all thoſe that love their own ſouls, both timely and ſeriouſly to conſider, what a loathſome, dreadful, and pernicious thing ſin is, (that no leſs than the precious blood of God could expiate;) and tremble to commit it: O let us not be ſo wickedly, ſo wretchedly, ſo fooliſhly deceived, as to imagine that God will favour that in us which he ſo ſeverely puniſhed in his only Son. There is indeed (as S. *Paul* telleth us) no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus; but it is unto them onely that walk not after the fleſh but after the ſpirit. Let us not therefore deceive our own ſouls, in our preſuming too far upon the mercy of a Saviour, for while he is merciful, he will, he muſt be juſt, neither is it poſſible he can be ſo merciful unto us as to be unjuſt to himſelf. O let this therefore timely perſwade us all to hate and abhor, even but the very leaſt thought of ſin, (as that which is directly oppoſite even to the very nature of God himſelf,) to tremble at the act, to ſtand amazed at that mercy that daily inviteth us to come out of this miſery; to pray often and earneſtly unto God againſt it, that ſo we may obtain a

Godly ſorrow for it, holineſs and conſtancy of heart for ever to avoid it, holy ſeverity of life to revenge our ſelves of it, and the ſweet enjoyments of God's holy Spirit after it: that ſo where ſin hath abounded, there grace may abound much more, that ſo all things (while we thus heartily love him, and fear to offend him) even our very ſins may work to our Advantage.

2. In the next place let us all (as wiſe Chriſtians) indeavour timely and carefully to make ſure work for our ſouls, by looking narrowly unto our titles in Chriſt, that ſo the redemption of this our purchaſed poſſeſſion may be made ſure unto us, leſt if this invaluable purchaſe, ſhall prove to be made by him that is a ſtranger to us, in whom we have no intereſt at all, and from whom we can derive no true diſcent, we may utterly deſpair that we can ever poſſibly expect, to be either inveſted in the purchaſe or eſtated in the poſſeſſion of this our heavenly inheritance: for the full and ſafe aſſurance whereof, (being the greateſt and moſt happy work belonging to a Chriſtian) let us (to our ſouls comfort) take theſe following Cautions.

1. Let us conſider, that although ſince the worlds creation, unto that fulneſs of time that the word was made fleſh, there were many millions of men between, yet S. *Paul* 1 *Cor.* 15. 47. gives us an account but of two onely, as remarkable for the fountains of Life: *the firſt man* (ſaith he) *is from the earth earthy; the ſecond man is from heaven*: from the firſt we receive a carnal, from the ſecond a ſpiritual life;

life: ſo that our bleſſed Saviour himſelf tells us, *John* 3. 3. that *Unleſs we be born again we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven*: for as the guilt of the firſt mans tranſgreſſion is derived unto us by carnal generation; ſo muſt the benefit of the ſecond mans obedience be conveighed unto us by ſpiritual regeneration: as he was made fleſh unto us, ſo muſt we be made ſpirit unto him, that ſo (both in our ſouls and bodies) we may become that holy, happy, true regenerate man, which by hard preſſing forward towards the heavenly mark, muſt (as S. *Paul* tells us) every day grow up more and more perfect in grace (as our bodies in nature) until at laſt we have attained to the perfection of the ſtature of ſpiritual men in Chriſt Jeſus.

2. Now for the happy attaining of this ſpiritual birth, inſomuch as it is derived from the bleſſed Spirit of God into the hearts of his Children, that ſo they may be born again of the Spirit and become the bleſſed babes of Chriſt; it behoveth us both timely and ſeriouſly, with all humbleneſs and earneſtneſs of ſoul, to make our hearty addreſſes unto him by prayer, for the ſweet injoyment of his holy Spirit, that ſo as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh and adviſeth, *Epheſ.* 4. 22. *We may put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts of the fleſh; and being renewed in the ſpirit of our minds, put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.*

3. Thirdly, that we may have a comfortable aſſurance of this our ſpiritual regeneration,

let us examine it by theſe following particulars. There ought to be in this as in the Carnal generation, firſt, life, and ſecondly, likeneſs; ſo that whoſoever wanteth either of theſe in his new birth may well doubt he hath no part nor portion in this heavenly purchaſe: Now as to the firſt, as we were all dead in *Adam*, ſo (in holy order unto this our ſpiritual birth) we muſt all be quickened in Chriſt, and this the Apoſtle tells us, *Epheſ.* 2. 4. *God who is rich in love, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were all dead in ſins hath quickened us together in Chriſt*: and as to the ſecond it is likewiſe evident, that he who hath begotten us again unto this ſpiritual life, hath likewiſe begotten us in his own likeneſs: (that is with all our true proportions of graces, (although but weak and ſmall) which are both properly and eſſentially belonging to the ſpiritual man;) and this is that which S. *Paul* teacheth, 1 *Cor.* 15. 48. *As is the earthy ſuch are thoſe that are earthy, and as is the heavenly, ſuch are thoſe that are heavenly*; and truly ſuch (if we belong to Chriſt) we muſt all be in perfection of parts although not of degrees, which cannot be attained here but ſhall be compleated hereafter; which imperfect holineſs of ours, in and thorough his perfect holineſs (who is become Holineſs unto us) ſhall be both graciouſly accepted and glorioufly rewarded.

4. Fourthly, for the farther ſtrengthening of this our bleſſed aſſurance we muſt all indeavour for a true and lively faith in Chriſt, for this is that eſpecially which S. *Paul* tells us, *Heb.* 11. 1. is the ground of things hoped for, and

and the evidence of things not seen. This is that Vital, radical, most necessary grace, without which it is impossible to please God. This is that happy hand that layeth fast hold upon the blessed promises, and sweetly resteth in the full perswasion of Gods gracious performances: and here we must again take heed that we rest not wholly in the bare act of Faith, but that we joyn it with (its blessed object) Christ, that so thereby each individual person of us may with comfort say (with *Thomas*) *My Lord and my God.*

5. Now lest there should be yet any farther doubt or danger remaining of this our comfortable assurance; it behoveth us in the last place, strictly to examine our Faith, by these signs or symptoms following. If our Faith be living, our hope in Christ will be stedfast, our love perfect, our zeal fervent, our joy in his presence unutterable, our grief in his absence intollerable, our desires towards him earnest, our longings for him insatiate: When we can truly find in this our regenerate man a gracious improvement of all these, we need not fear but that our title is good, our evidence safe, and the future enjoyment of our heavenly possession certain. Let us all therefore carefully beware that we lose not our first love; for if once our affections begin to cool to Godward, they will soon inflame to the world, and leave us both joyless in conscience, and comfortless in Christ.

O thou therefore whosoever thou art that readest this and art yet in thy sins, let me (I pray thee) in the last place admonish thee not to

ſet light by what thou now readeſt, but to make a ſober and a ſanctified uſe of it. God uſeth commonly the weakeſt means to do the greateſt works, that he thereby may have the greater glory; this hour (for ought thou knoweſt) may be the bleſſed hour of thy converſion. O quench not therefore (even at this very preſent) the bleſſed motions of God's holy Spirit in thee; when they are once gone how knoweſt thou whether they ſhall ever return, and woe then will be unto thy ſoul for ever, when thy time of calling is once paſt; to day therefore (even this thy day of grace) if thou wilt hear his (holy) voice, harden not thy heart againſt him by thy rebellious courſes; leſt thoſe bleſſed things that belong unto thy peace be for ever hid from thine eyes; when no tears can be ſufficient to bewail thee, no hand ſhall be afforded to relieve thee, no intermiſſion of thy grief to comfort thee, and (to the farther terrour and amazement of thy guilty ſoul) when God himſelf who only can releaſe thee, ſhall for ever hide his mercy from thee, and (to augment thy ſorrow) laugh at thy deſtruction. Let this therefore timely move thee to bewail thine own miſery, and humbly and earneſtly to cry to God for mercy, that ſo of Carnal thou mayſt become Spiritual, and as the holy Apoſtle yet farther adviſeth thee, *Rom.* 12. 13. that thou mayſt *walk honeſtly as in the day, not in ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, not in chambering & wantonneſs, not in ſtrife & envying; but put thou on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and take no* (farther) *care for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts thereof.* Conſider well of what thou haſt read, and the Lord (in mercy) improve it to thee, for thy Converſion.

THE

THE PRAYER.

O *Moſt holy, and for ever bleſſed Lord God, and in Jeſus Chriſt my moſt merciful and loving Father, the eternal lover, gracious redeemer, conſtant preſerver, and eternal comforter, of the ſouls and bodies of thy Saints; who out of the deep Abyſs of thine Eternal Love, haſt given me thine onely Son to die for me, and in him, thy ſelf Eternally unto me: Give me alſo I beſeech thee a broken and a contrite heart, for my many and my grievous ſins, which were the cauſe of his great ſufferings; give me an holy and regenerate heart, to hate all ſin, even in the very leaſt appearance of it, as directly oppoſite to thine Eternal Eſſence, who art Holineſs it ſelf; give me a wounded heart, for grieving thy good Spirit; give me a fixed, zealous, and a conſtant heart in thy ſervice, an humble and a thankful heart for thy mercies, a faithful and a joyful heart in thy promiſes, and a cheerful and a willing heart at thy call; that when my days of ſin and ſorrow ſhall be ended, I may boldly ſay with comfort and aſſured confidence in thee; Into thy hands (Lord) Jeſus I willingly and joyfully reſign my ſpirit, for thou haſt redeemed me O Lord, thou God of truth: grant this, dear Father, for thine Eternal love ſake in Chriſt the Righteous.* Amen.

CHAP. V.

Of the sinners ungodly distrust of God's mercy in Christ, occasioned by the multitude, hainousness and long continuance of his sins.

HAving now in some small measure (as God hath enabled me) declared unto thee the invaluable richness of God's love unto man in Christ Jesus; it is now needful (in hope of regaining such as are out of Christ) that I indeavour to remove from them, such supposed difficulties as Satan (their professed enemy) indeavours daily to obtrude upon them, in perswading them (with wicked *Cain*) that their sins are greater than can be forgiven: This is that perilous and destructive rock against which too many shipwrack'd souls, (too heavy laden with the weighty burden of their sins, driven by the tempestuous winds of God's threatnings against them, tossed in the waves of despairing thoughts, without the rudder of his sacred word to steer them, the blessed compass of his holy Spirit to direct them, the rich food of faith to sustain them, and the strong Anchor of hope to secure them,) have been most miserably dashed in pieces, and irrecoverably and eternally lost. For the timely and (I hope) the comfortable prevention whereof, I desire all those who (by reason of their many sins and Satans powerful temptations) lie groaning under the sad pressure of ungodly thoughts perswading to despair, seriously and religiously to consider with me of the

the weight and comfort of these following particulars; and the Lord in his rich mercy, so bless them unto every soul that needs them, that he may have the glory, they the comfort of their safe deliverance.

1. Consider first, (I pray thee) of God's love unto thee as thou art his creature, that (as *David* tells thee) in his book are all thy members written, that he is truly and eternally good, from whom no evil can proceed, and that therefore it is impossible that he should hate any thing he hath made: Consider likewise that he brought thee out of not being into Being; that from this comfortable being in nature he gratiously brought thee unto that far better and more blessed being in grace, whereby (as by the happy means conducing to the blessed end of thy Creation) thou mayst be safely guided to thy best of being, thy rest and comfort both of soul and body in eternal glory; and all this for none other cause but God's free love unto thee, which from all eternity he had set upon thee; *God*, (as Saint *John* telleth thee, 1 *John* 1. 4.) *is* (essentially) *Love*; it is therefore impossible that any thing but love can naturally proceed from him: He is that great Fountain of sweetness from whence those rivulets of sweet comforts are derived to the souls and bodies of his Saints, from whence it is impossible that any bitter streams of wrath can willingly proceed: Believe it, O believe it to the saving comfort of thy sin-sick doubting spirit, that it is utterly against the blessed nature of Almighty God, to behold thee his sinful creature miserable:

From hence it is that all his judgments denounced againſt ſinners are conditional; no Judgment denounced but (upon true repentance) with mercy included: Such was that againſt *Nineveh*, *Jonah* 1. 2. *Yet forty days and Nineveh ſhall be deſtroyed*; and ſuch is that of the Apoſtle againſt rebellious ſinners, 1 *Cor.* 6. *Neither Fornicatours, nor Adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous perſons, nor Back-biters, nor Drunkards ſhall obtain the kingdom of God*: *Nineveh* repented and was not deſtroyed, repent thou likewiſe of thy ſins, and thou ſhalt be ſaved. So that now thou plainly ſeeſt, God's puniſhments for ſin may be rather ſaid to be extorted from him than inflicted by him: From this his great unwillingneſs to puniſh ſinners, ariſing from the richneſs of his love to man, is that his great patience and long-ſuffering towards them; in giving of them yet a longer and a larger time of repentance; from whence it was that he complained by his Prophet *Amos*, *Amos* 2. 13. with an *Ecce*, *Behold I am preſſed under you as a cart that is laden with ſheaves*: O ſee the goodneſs of a gratious God and be comforted; when thou haſt not only wearied out thy ſelf in wickedneſs, but even thy God alſo, by adding ſin upon ſin, and thereby load upon load as well upon his patience and long-ſuffering towards thee as upon thine own too much already overburdened conſcience within thee: yet ſuch is the greatneſs of his love unto thee that he is ſtill willing to forbear thee, and to tarry yet longer for thee, that ſo he may (if poſſible) at laſt have mercy on thee.

Hither-

Hitherto thou hast onely seen Gods love unto thee at a distance, as he is thy merciful Creatour and thou art his sinful creature; give me now leave I pray thee to lead thee nearer to him as he is in Christ, from all Eternity, thy most merciful and loving father, and as thou in him art his adopted and beloved child: And here thou mayst (with joy and comfort to thy wounded spirit) behold him so intirely loving thee, as to give his only and beloved Son to die for thee, that so believing in him thou shouldst not perish but have everlasting life; of which the holy Apostle assures thee, *John* 3. 16. in whose blessed obedience (which from all eternity he hath accepted for thy disobedience) thou mayst, with confidence and comfort, behold him to be thy God, and thereby find him gratiously sustaining thee in thine infirmities; his rod and his staff, as *David* tells thee *Psalm* the 23. they comfort thee, the one by sustaining thy weakness, the other by correcting thy wilfulness: pitying thy weakness, bemoaning and bewailing thy wilfulness, wounding, rending, breaking thine obdurate heart by the terrours of his Law, that thou mayst thereby be healed by the glad tidings of his Gospel; inviting, intreating, beseeching, embracing, nay even compelling thee to mercy and forgiveness. O hear, what thy merciful Lord saith unto thee by his servant *David*, *Psal.* 102. Like as a fathers heart yerneth over his Children, so the Lord hath mercy on them that fear him: for he knoweth how frail they are and that they are but dust: well therefore may S. *Paul* call him the father of

mercies, and the God of all consolations: 2 Cor. 1. Hear also what he saith unto thee by his Prophet *Ezekiel*, *Ezek.* 18. 31. *Cast away from you all your transgressions and make you a new heart, and a new spirit, for why will ye die, O ye house of Israel? For I desire not the death of him that dieth; cause ye therefore one another to return and live:* which (to the comfort of all doubting souls) he afterward *Ezek.* 33. confirmeth with an oath, *As I live saith the Lord, I desire not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live.* Hear yet farther what thy Saviour saith unto thee by the mouth of his Apostle, 1 *Pet.* 2.11. In Christs name and in Christs stead we pray and beseech you brethren, that ye abstain from fleshly lusts which fight against the soul: And lastly, for the farther manifestation and more assured confirmation of these his tender bowels of compassion towards thee, hear farther (to the cheering of thy soul) what thy blessed Saviour himself from his own lips saith unto thee, in that his soul satisfying parable of the returning Prodigal, *Luk.* 15.20. in these words; *And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion on him, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him, and said unto his servants, bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet, and bring the fatted calf and kill him, and let us eat and be merry, for this my son was dead and is alive, was lost and is found:* O the wonderful condescention of the loving nature of thy grievously offended, and yet most merciful Father! Thou hast long been a run-away from him by thy sinful and rebellious courses against

him,

him, thou hast spent thy portion of the gifts and graces of his holy Spirit, and art become wretched, and poor, and blind, and naked, and miserable; O let the sight of this thy extream misery, and the gratious forwardness of thy heavenly Father unto mercy, perswade thee willingly and boldly to return home, and humble thy self low unto him: He now seeth thee afar off in the sighs and groans, in the doubts and fears of thy perplexed spirit, and is ever ready to run out in mercy to meet thee, and in joy at thy return to fall upon thy neck and kiss thee, even with the happy kisses of his holy Spirit in thine heart, with which thou canst not chuse but be both fully and for ever satisfied: The pretious robe of Christs righteousness is now ready to be put upon thee, the ring upon thine hand to wed thee unto Christ for ever, the shooes upon thy feet, that blessed preparation of the Gospel, to lead thee unto holiness and righteousness of life and conversation, and the fatted calf, that spiritual food, to do the will of thy father, which will feed thee with that fulness of joy and comfort in the holy Ghost, that will both delight and refresh thee for ever: this is that blessed food which the world knows not of, of which one hearty meal will yield thee more true nourishment than a whole age of sin.

That thou mayst yet farther see the sweetness, richness, and exceeding tenderness of the great love of this thy good and gratious Father; consider him yet farther in his loving invitations, gratious promises, and never failing performances; that thou mayst both clearly

ly see and faithfully believe with holy *David*, *Psal.* 144 that his mercy is above all his works; and from thence learn, that it must needs be then transcendently far above all thy sinful actions, that so thou mayst go out of thy self, and thine own despairing misery, and cast thy self freely and boldly into his blessed arms of endless mercy, where (if thou comest with a broken and a contrite spirit) it is impossible thou canst want either true welcome or content.

Hear his gratious invitation by his Prophet *Isaiah*, *Chap.* 55. All you that be thirsty come unto the waters of life and drink freely; how joyfully oughtest thou to welcome this his blessed invitation? Thou hast long dwelt in the dry and barren wilderness of sin, where no water of comfort is, and thy heart now fainteth within thee, and this is that spiritual rock of refreshment, Christ Jesus the righteous, from whom the pretious waters of eternal life do plentifully flow to all those thirsty souls that seek to him for succour: O say thou therefore now with holy confidence, as happy *David*, *Psal.* 42. 2. *My soul is athirst for God, yea even for the living God, O when shall I come and appear before the face of my God.* This is that living water of which thy Saviour himself tells thee, *John* 4. 14. of which when thou hast once tasted thou shalt never thirst, either for comfort here or for blessedness hereafter; for of his fulness we shall all be fully satisfied.

Hear farther how compassionately thy blessed Saviour himself inviteth thee, *Matth.* 11. *Come unto me all you that are heavy laden and I will ease*

eaſe and refreſh you: Thou art now laden with a burden inſupportable, even with that heavy load of ſin and ſorrow, which doth preſs thee down to ruine and deſtruction; the ſorrows of eternal death have even incompaſſed thee, and the pains of hell (in thy deſparing thoughts) have taken hold of thee; O lay now this thy heavy load of ſin and ſorrow upon his ſhoulders, who was *Vir dolorum*, a man of ſorrows, who now thus freely offers thee to bear thy burthen for thee, and thou canſt not fail of finding eaſe and comfort.

Let me now lead thee to thoſe bleſſed promiſes of his, which are all yea and Amen, of which his ſacred word is plentifully full; in them there is much of ſweetneſs to diſtreſſed ſouls: take onely theſe that follow for a taſte, and the Lord in mercy give thee comfort by them.

Hear what he promiſeth by his holy Prophet *Iſaiah*, and in hearing of it, let thine eyes melt into tears and thine heart into ſorrow for, ſo much, ſo long diſpleaſing him ſo merciful a Father, *Iſaiah 66. Is it poſſible* (ſaith he) *for a mother to forget her child and not to have pity on the fruit of her womb? and though ſhe do forget, yet will I not forget thee ſaith the Lord*: How full of ſweet comfort to a diſconſolate ſoul is this his Fatherly expreſſion? what could he have ſaid more to manifeſt the tenderneſs of his affections towards thee, than what he hath here ſpoken? *Jonathans* love to *David* was ſaid to exceed the love of women: how much more excellently ſweet is God than nature? if theſe ſmall Rivulets of love here upon

earth

earth deserve the name of happiness; how much more blessed may we judge that soul that is imbraced by the blessed fountain of love, God blessed for ever? Thou hast (as those rebellious Israelites) a long time rebelled against him; and yet (as thy most tender hearted father) he still owns thee as his child, and with a most affectionate love (infinitely exceeding all that is or can be upon earth.) Now thou art plunged by the terrour of thy conscience, into the greatest depth of extreamest misery; even now also his gratious promise is, Not to forget thee, but (in this thy greatest time of need) to remember thee with mercy. O Praise the Lord therefore for his goodness, and be converted unto him, and as he hath promised thee by his holy Prophet, *Ezek.* 1. *He will be* (gratiously) *converted unto thee.*

O let not the number of thy sins affright thee, for Christ assureth thee by his holy Apostle S. *John*, 1 *John* 7. 9. that it is his pretious blood that cleanseth thee from all iniquity. Let not the nature of thy sins amaze thee, for God hath promised by his holy Prophet, *Isa.* 1. 18. (if thou wilt not be perverse) that if they be as red as scarlet, he will make them white as snow. Let not thy long rebellions against God disturb thee, for thou hast his faithful promise, *Ezek.* 18. that whensoever thou returnest from thy sins, he will blot them out of his remembrance; thy conscience will not trouble thee, for S. *Paul* assureth thee, *Rom.* 5. that being justified by faith, thou hast peace with God: and for thy farther and thy full assurance

of

of the safety of thy soul in Christ, take this the summ of all to comfort thee, that even God himself (whom thou hast so much offended) cannot in justice condemn thee; *For there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* Rom. 8. 32. And for the blessed confirmation of Gods gratious performance of all this, thou hast his sealing promise to assure thee, that heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one tittle of his sacred word shall pass, *Matt.* 24. 35. From hence it was that S. *Paul* made that his universal challenge both to men and Devils, *Rom.* 8. 32, 33. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

Thou hast now (to the comfort of thy conscience I hope) clearly seen that Gods promises to his children, are most gratious, manifold, absolute and universal: How is it now possible that thou shouldest fear to be excluded from this assurance of mercy, wherein all sorts of people, all kinds, degrees and continuances of sins, all times and seasons, in which they are committed, all qualities and conditions of sinners, are thus gratiously comprehended? Who can now doubt of Gods end in making these his blessed promises? when he plainly seeth they were made onely for mans sake; all that he promiseth, all that he giveth to us, all that he requireth of us, is to make us happy. Who can question their truth that proceed from him who is truth it self? who shall dare to question

on his power to perform them, who is infinite? and who can queſtion his willingneſs, from whoſe infinite love to man they all proceed? Unleſs therefore thou wilt wretchedly exclude thy ſelf from mercy, whom God thus graciouſly offereth to receive, and thereby moſt wickedly deny him in his ever bleſſed Eſſence, and moſt holy Attributes, to thine own endleſs deſtruction both of ſoul and body, be not faithleſs but believe and live. Faith is that holy hand by which theſe bleſſed promiſes are made good unto thee; for which (as the crown of all) thou haſt the faithful promiſe of thy bleſſed Saviour, *John* 11. 25, 26. *I am the reſurrection and the life, he that believeth in me although he were dead, yet ſhall he live, and whoſoever liveth and believeth in me ſhall never die.* O therefore ſay now with comfort and ſure confidence in him, *Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief*: how ſweet is this his yoke, how light his burden? when thou believeſt in him, thou enjoyeſt life eternal by him, and thereby ſafety to thy body, ſweetneſs to thy ſoul, peace in thy life, and reſt at thy death: Which the Lord in his rich mercy give unto thee, and unto all thoſe that love and expect the joyful day of his appearing.

Pious

PIOUS ADMONITIONS
Upon the preceding Meditations.

1. LEt this in the firſt place admoniſh thee to ſet timely upon this bleſſed work of Repentance, for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth: reſolve therefore ſeriouſly while thy God is yet to be found, to cry mightily unto him for mercy. Remember that *David* tells thee, *Pſal.* 144. that *The Lord is near unto all them that call upon him faithfully*; yea, ſo exceeding gratious is he in his properſity to mercy, in willingly receiving thoſe that ſue to him for pardon, that as the Prophet tells thee, *Iſaiah* 55. *Before they cry I will hear, and while they ſpeak I will anſwer.* O be not therefore now afraid to cry unto him; he looketh not upon thee, as thou art in the filthy and polluted rags of thine own uncleanneſs, but as thou art in the pretious Robe of Chriſts righteouſneſs; all thy ſins are his, all his perfections are thine, he now pleads them to his father (and to thy father) for thee, and if he interceed to his father he cannot be denied. Let thy firſt work therefore be to get a ſure intereſt in him by true and lively faith, and then thou needeſt not to doubt, but that thou ſhalt appear a bleſſed ſoul before him.

2. If thy faith be yet weak, let not that diſmay thee, but comfort thy ſelf in this, that although it be weak, yet it is living; if there be onely bloſſoms of grace now, there will hereafter be fruit, even the bleſſed fruit of mortification to ſin, and ſanctification to righteouſneſs:

teousness: remember to thy comfort that God hath promised (who never faileth to perform) *Isaiah* 42. 3. *That he will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax;* If therefore thy faith be now languishing for want of Divine sustenance, feed it often with the sweet refreshments of Gods souls sufficing promises, and (with his blessing upon them) it will assuredly gather more strength; these happy beginnings will have gratious proceeding, blessed endings.

3. Beware thou rely not onely on the bare act of Faith, but joyn it with its blessed object Christ Jesus: for it will little advantage thee to believe that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, unless thou canst also savingly believe that he died for thy sins, and rose again for thy justification: This is that blessed and that saving hand of faith that lays fast hold upon thy blessed Saviour, and thereby gains a full and safe assurance of thine own proper and peculiar interest in him, and this is joyfully confirm'd unto thee by thy chast love and firm obedience to him.

4. If thou findest thy faith still failing, be constant, frequent, fervent, even importunate with God in thy devotions. Holy importunity of soul, is that spiritual force that both wrestles with God & overcomes him: He that is all love and hath given thee his Son to die for thee is much delighted (in and thorough him) to be overcome by thee: when thou strugglest with him for mercy, thou overcomest him by himself; his mercy unto thee hath satisfied his justice for thee: how great is this his goodness,

how

how tender are his bowels of compassion towards thee, who thus gratiously is willing to be overcome by thee? this is that holy violence that takes heaven by force; this is that lovely eye of thine affection that wounds the tender heart of his compassions towards thee, and will not let him go without those kisses of his mouth, the sweet refreshments of his holy Spirit. If thy prayers therefore be wanting, thy faith may well be wavering; be therefore much with God in prayer, that thereby thou mayst be strong in faith.

5. If after thine addresses unto God for mercy, thou art yet destitute of that spiritual comfort which thy thirsty soul desireth; be not discouraged, but wait thou still with patience the Lords leasure, be strong by trusting in him, and, assure thy soul with holy *David*, *Psalm* 17.14. that he at last shall comfort thine heart, for (to the great comfort of thy drooping spirit) he hath yet farther promised, *Psal.*91.14. that he will deliver thee (even from these thy dreadful and desparing thoughts) because thou hast trusted in him. Be not afraid therefore, for that thou seemest to be thus sadly deserted a while for thy sins sake, thou art yet assuredly beloved for thy Saviours sake; although he hide himself a while behind the wall (of thy corruptions) yet he will (gratiously) look thorough the Lattice (of these thy sincere humiliations;) although thy disconsolate heart be now sadly disquieted within thee, yet upon thy meek and humble addresses farther made by fervent prayer to thy God for mercy, my soul for thine, thou shalt assuredly receive

the

the voice of joy and gladneſs. Let not thy ſoul therefore be thus diſquieted within thee, but ſtill truſt thou in God for he will be at laſt, the help of thy dejected countenance and thy God: As thou haſt had thine aberrations from grace, ſo thou mayeſt now expect a while to have theſe thine inundations of ſorrow: Let this therefore admoniſh thee to abhor thoſe ſins that have occaſioned theſe ſufferings, to be timely and ſincerely humbled for them, and hereafter to avoid all manner of allurements to them: When thou art thus bleſſedly reſolved, thou mayſt with holy confidence aſſure thy ſin-ſick ſoul that thou art Gods child, that he hideth his face from thee but for a moment, that with everlaſting kindneſs he may gather thee; that he hath therefore broken thee with ſorrow, that he may hereafter more effectually, and ſecurely bind thee up with ſpiritual comfort; and with holy confidence aſſure thy ſelf with S. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 2. that *God is faithful who will not ſuffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able*, but in the midſt of thy temptation will (graciouſly) make a way for thee to eſcape: which the deſire of my ſoul is, that the Lord in his rich mercy will ſpeedily grant unto thee, and unto all thoſe that ſadly lie groaning under the weighty burden of their ſins.

THE

THE PRAYER.

O Eternal, Almighty, moſt merciful, and for ever bleſſed Lord God of heaven and earth, and in Jeſus Chriſt my moſt merciful and loving Father, behold me I moſt meekly beſeech thee, in much mercy and compaſſion towards me, thy ſtubborn, ſinful and moſt rebellious child, here moſt humbly (but moſt dejectedly) now proſtrate before thee; Lord I have ſinned and my ſouls earneſt deſire is unfainedly to repent; I have long lain wallowing in the filthy mire of ſin, and am now aſhamed to appear before thee; I have moſt grievouſly ſinned againſt thy precepts, againſt thy promiſes, againſt thy mercies, againſt thy judgements, againſt the gratious and the frequent viſits of thy holy Spirit in me, againſt thy holy and continual providence over me, againſt my many vows and promiſes of my better obedience to thee, againſt thy great patience and long ſuffering towards me, and againſt the daily checks and horrours of mine own accuſing conſcience within me; I am now grown old and impudent in ſin; and am no more worthy to be called thy child. Holy Father out of this the deep ſenſe of mine own miſery, and my yet comfortable hope of thine abundant mercy, I am now (by thy grace) both willing and deſirous to return unto thee: Father forgive me, for I knew not what I did. I have long wearied out my ſelf in ways of wickedneſs, and have now found nothing in my hands but ſhame and ſorrow: the Devil hath beguiled me, the world hath bewitched me, and mine own falſe heart hath deceived me. I confeſs O Lord, I confeſs, that I have too too long been the child of rebellion, and that it were now moſt

moſt juſt with thee to make me for ever the child of perdition. But O Lord I am fleſh, plead not therefore againſt me in the thunder of thy judgments; O let me hear thee much rather in the ſtill and ſweet Muſick of thy mercies. O God moſt righteous, O Lord moſt merciful, O Father moſt pityful, caſt me not away I meekly beſeech thee in thy ſore diſpleaſure, but in the multitude of thy rich and tender mercies in thy bleſſed Son, to all theſe fainting ſouls that ſue to thee for pardon, have mercy on me; O thou that cameſt to ſeek and to ſave the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael, *have mercy on me; O thou bleſſed and eternal Comforter that comforteſt the drooping ſouls of thine Elect, have mercy on me; ſuffer me not O Lord to be ingulphed in this dreadful depth of my deſpairing thoughts, but reach out thy hand of mercy and ſupport me: O thou that ſtilleſt the tempeſtuous Sea of Sin, rebuke theſe winds and waves, and cauſe a bleſſed calm within me; for thy name ſake, O Lord, be merciful unto my ſins for they are great; My God, my God, look upon me; why haſt thou forſaken me, and art ſo far from hearing my Complaint, who haſt ſo often promiſed me upon my returns unto thee, to be merciful unto me? O hide not thy face from me, nor caſt me thy penitent ſervant away in diſpleaſure; but ſave me for thy mercy ſake; make haſt O Lord to hear and help me, for I am in trouble. My ſoul melteth for heavineſs, O raiſe me up according to thy promiſe; O let my ſoul live and it ſhall praiſe thee, and thy judgments ſhall help me: I am ſore afflicted, make no long tarrying O my God. O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord conſider and do it, defer not for thine own ſake, for thy promiſe ſake, for thy bleſſed Sons ſake, O my God.* Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Upon the great danger of presuming too far upon the rich mercy of God in Christ Jesus, with the sinful and sad consequents thereof.

WE having now, (to our souls comfort) by Gods gratious assistance (in the blessed conduct of his holy word) passed safely through the dreadful dangers of the rock of despair; it now remaineth that I indeavour yet farther to preserve thee from that far greater of presumption, the dangerous passage being so strait between them, that while the shipwrackt soul indeavours carefully to avoid the one (for want of careful steerage by the rudder of Gods sacred word) it is in great danger to be shipwrackt on the other: for the timely prevention whereof (this being indeed that most dangerous rock against which so many careless souls, in all times and ages of the world, have been so wretchedly and eternally lost) let us with all holy fear and careful circumspection, make use of these directions following.

Since the time that we have sailed in the troublesome sea of this life, amongst the many and most miserable inundations of sin and fluctuations of sorrow, by the strong winds of afflictions and stronger of temptations, we have been far driven out of our course for heaven: It much concerns us all therefore (even the very best of us) to be furnished with such spiritual food to sustain us, such safe directions

to guide us such sure Anchors to hold us, and such rich cordials to comfort us, as in all our straits and distresses in this our dangerous voyage to the blessed haven of our endless happiness, may abundantly relieve and succour us. A true and lively faith is our food, Gods holy word our direction, a lively hope our Anchor, Gods gratious promises and his holy Spirit in our hearts by faith to apply them, our rich Cordial: Let us take these along with us, and we need not fear to pass safely, and arrive at our blessed port comfortably.

First then (by the warrant of Gods holy word) in order to the safety of our passage, let us take along with us these three weighty considerations. First, what the blessed nature of God is; as well in relation to himself in his Essence, as in relation to us in his Attributes: Secondly, what the cursed nature of sin is; and thirdly, why Gods promises were made, and to whom; that so thereby the wretched and presumptuous sinner may behold (as in a glass) his own deformity, and thereby plainly see the sadness of his lost condition, in too daringly presuming on the mercy of a Saviour, while he is yet a bold presumptuous and rebellious sinner.

First, as to the blessed nature of God we are to understand (as hath before been largely discourse) that all his holy Attributes of Power, Wisdom, Holiness, Truth, Justice, Mercy, and the rest, although they are unto us divers, unto God they are intirely one and the very same Incomprehensible, Infinite, and Eternal,

Eternal, Blessed and most Glorious Essence; so that for us to conceive God to be some or any of these separately and distinctly divided from the rest, and not conjunctly and Eternally to be all these in one, is not onely to divide God from himself, but most wickedly (as much as in us lieth) to rob him of his Glorious, Blessed and Eternal Being, than which it is not possible there can be greater injury or dishonour offer'd unto him.

Secondly, as to the cursed nature of sin, (eternally foreseen by God to be presumptuously and wilfully committed by the perverse nature of man, notwithstanding the manifold and free-offers of his grace to restrain them from it, by which it is most justly said by God that mans perdition is of himself) so infinitely and eternally was it hated by God, that no less than the bitter death and passion of his blessed Son was a sufficient ransome to redeem his Elect from it: it being utterly impossible that God (who is holiness it self) should in justice be reconcil'd unto man (in his faln sinful nature so diametrically opposite to God) without an infinite satisfaction made to satisfie his justice, and to reconcile his mercy unto man for ever. Notwithstanding which infinite ransom paid for his Elect in Christ, we daily see what these bitter fruits of sin are even in the very Elect themselves, by his rod of afflictions, and his fatherly chastisements upon them, both to wean and scare them from it, as is evident in *David* and many others the dear children and servants of God. And (as our blessed Saviour himself saith) if these things

shall be done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry? if Gods Elect must suffer such afflictions for sin, what fearful vengeance think we is there prepared for the wicked? lamentable examples whereof we have in the severe punishments of *Cain*, the universal deluge, *Chore*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, *Nadab* and *Abihu* with many others: By all which it is most clearly evident that although Christ from all Eternity, was given in Gods decree for his Elect, in and thorough whom he daily shews himself both good and gratious to his own; yet (to the terrour and amazement of the wicked) this gratious goodness and invaluable love of his extends not at all to them, as they are yet in their sins: And this we have plainly proved to us by that of the Prophet *David*, *Psal.* 33. in these words, *The eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and his ears are open to their prayers. But the face of the Lord* (even his angry countenance) *is upon them that do evil, to destroy their memory from out of the earth*; and *Psal.* 72. he farther saith, *How good a God is the God of Israel to all them that be of an upright heart?* but it follows immediately after, *Behold, O Lord, they shall perish which depart from thee, thou hast destroyed all those which have broken their faith with thee.*

Now thirdly, as to the good and gratious promises of God, know thou whosoever thou art that darest thus boldly look God in the face for mercy, and yet still resolvest to go on in thy presumptuous sins, know thou I say (and tremble) that (however sweet and gratious these his pretious promises both are and ever shall

shall be unto his Elect children, for whose sake onely, and onely unto whom they were all made in Christ the righteous, in whom are all the promises) without thy severe and hearty humiliation for thy many daring and presumptuous sins, humble and willing confession of them unto Almighty God, unfeigned sorrow for them, true and syncere repentance of them, and holy revenge against them; fixed constancy, happy fervency, and gratious perseverance, in all these; with humble, often, earnest, and importunate prayers unto God for saving faith whereby thou mayst in Christ lay hold upon them; thou hast no part nor portion in them. In vain is it therefore for thee while thou remainest in sin to flatter thy self with hopes of pardon: thou sayst, that God is merciful, and that his mercy is above all his works; but thou must also know that he is also just, and that his justice & his mercy are himself: assure thy sinful soul therefore, that it is utterly impossible for him (unto whom all good things are possible) to be so merciful unto thee, as to be unjust unto himself, whose justice, and mercy, and all his other holy Attributes are one and the same Eternal, Blessed and most Glorious Being; and can be no more divided in him, than he can cease to be what he is, God blessed for ever: From hence was that of holy *David*, *Psal.* 101. *I will sing unto the Lord of mercy and judgment*; not of mercy alone lest I presume, not of Judgement alone lest I despair: but of mercy and judgement together, that I may both comfortably and awfully know, that there is (so)

mercy with God, that he may (and muſt) be feared.

Conſider yet farther, what a moſt horrible and deteſtable ſin thou committeſt to think that Chriſt therefore died for thee, that thou mighteſt by his plenary ſatisfaction for ſin go on the more ſecurely, the more boldly, the more preſumptuouſly in ſinning: Is not this as the holy Apoſtle tells thee, *Jude* 4. —— *To turn the grace of God into wantonneſs?* and (which is yet much more abominable) to tread the moſt pretious blood of Jeſus under thy feet? Canſt thou be ſo fooliſhly wicked to imagine that God will favour that in thee, which he ſo ſeverely puniſhed in his own, his onely and beloved Son? How fearfully doſt thou offend againſt him, to build thy liberty of ſinning upon his back, who is the Son of Righteouſneſs? yea, Righteouſneſs it ſelf, whoſe merits death and paſſion are indeed fully and abundantly ſufficient for the ſaving of all men, but are onely efficient unto thoſe that are ordained unto life Eternal, by faith and holineſs of life, the happy means conducing to the bleſſed end: O how ſinfully and deſperately vain art thou to cry unto thy ſelf Peace, Peace, when as *Iſaiah* tells thee, *Iſai.* 50. *There is no peace to the wicked ſaith my God;* O how ſad and lamentable is this thy wilful miſtake? thou promiſeſt unto thy ſelf the rich treaſures of Chriſt, in whom are all the treaſures; whereas his holy Apoſtle plainly tells thee, *Rom.* 2. 5. *That thou treaſureſt up unto thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement.* He therefore farther counſels thee,

Epheſ.

Ephes. 5. 6. Let no man deceive you with vain words, for this know ye, that no whoremonger, neither unclean person, nor covetous, hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God, for (know thou assuredly) *for such things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of Disobedience.* Thou now perhaps makest a mock at sin; O (as thou lovest the welfare of thy soul) take heed, for if thou speedily repentest not, assure thy self that God will make a mock at punishment: as thou sowest even so shalt thou reap; if thou sowest to the flesh (to fulfil the lusts thereof) of the flesh thou shalt reap corruption; if (by true and timely repentance) thou sowest to the Spirit, of the Spirit thou shalt reap life everlasting.

Consider next of the sad and fearful consequents of thy presumptuous sinning, & be warned in time to humble thy self for it and earnestly to call to God for mercy and forgiveness: First, by thy custom in sinning, will most assuredly follow (without preventing grace) thy security in sin, by which thou wilt be render'd both insensible of the sadness of thy present condition, and likewise incapable thereby of seeking unto God for remedy: O take heed I beseech thee, where the stream of thy sin runneth stillest, there the channel is ever deepest, and thy danger both of soul and body greatest; Satan now troubles thee not because he is in firm possession of thee, thy conscience checks thee not, because it is now lull'd asleep, and cannot awake without a miracle of mercy shewed unto thee, and God himself (who by reason of thy wicked life is now de-

parted from thee) will now ſay unto thee as unto thoſe rebellious ſons of *Iſrael*, *Deut.* 32. *Hoſ.* 4. 17. *Jeſſurun hath kicked againſt me, let him alone*: Let him alone! O moſt dreadful ſaying, and of all the threatnings of Almighty God moſt lamentable! Let him alone to fill up the full meaſure of his ſins in this life, that I may lay *Judgement to the rule, and righteouſneſs to the ballance*, *Iſai.* 28. 17, 18. that I may meaſure up the full proportion of my vengeance againſt him in the life to come: *Let him alone*, that ſo by his hardening his ſinfully rebellious heart yet more and more againſt me, I may thereby have moſt juſt cauſe, yet more and more to harden it, by my moſt righteous withdrawing of that my ſaving grace (which hath been by me ſo often offered, and by him ſo ſtubbornly and ſo often refuſed) yet farther and farther off from him: *Let him alone*, that this his wilful and ſtiff-necked obduracy may lead him yet farther and farther off from me, even unto that final impenitency, that ſhall lead him unto endleſs miſery, that ſo I may for ever hide my face of mercy from him, where no tears of ſorrow ſhall bewail him, no eye pity him, no hand of comfort relieve him.

O moſt woful and for ever moſt deplorable condition of the preſumptuous ſinner, without all hope of intermiſſion, without all poſſibility of ending! when even thoſe bleſſed ſpirits of the juſt (now in their place of reſt and happineſs) ſhall much rejoyce to ſee God glorified in thy deſtruction: When thoſe holy Angels that would have been thy bleſſed guardians

dians and protectors here, ſhall then moſt gladly be the ready inſtruments to execute Gods righteous Judgement paſſed upon thee; and thoſe accurſed ſpirits that have here thus wretchedly deluded thee, ſhall there for ever and for ever, wofully afflict thee: O conſider this in time thou that forgetteſt God by thy daring and preſumptuous ſins; for after this life ended with thee, (when time ſhall be no more) thou canſt not then have any farther time of repentance: this ſhort and brittle life, and in it that ſhorter time of Gods calling of thee by his holy Spirit, to repentance and amendment, are thine onely day of Grace, and when theſe are gone they are gone for ever, and all thy hopes of mercy with them.

PIOUS ADMONITIONS

Upon the preceding Meditations.

IN the firſt place, Let this admoniſh thee, whoſoever thou art that dareſt thus preſumptuouſly proceed in thy rebellious courſes, (and thereby tempt thy bleſſed Saviour to deſtroy thee) to beware in time, leſt thou art ſnacht away even in the very midſt of all thy bold preſumptions. Remember that holy admonition of S. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 8, 9. *Let us not commit fornication, as ſome of them committed fornication, and fell in one day three and twenty thouſand; Neither let us tempt Chriſt as ſome of them alſo tempted him, and were deſtroyed of Ser-*

pents; Neither let us murmure as some of them murmured and were destroyed of the destroyer. Thou seest here what thou art to trust to, that there are both temporal and eternal punishments prepared for thee; in stead of that mercy which thou so vainly expectest, thou shalt receive Justice; in stead of Salvation utter ruine and destruction; that Divine Justice which in thy sinful thoughts thou hast so wickedly excluded from his Divine Mercy, will now (if thou repentest not) withhold that mercy from thee: Remember I pray thee what God saith unto thee by his Prophet *David*, Psal 50. *Thou thought'st wickedly that I am even such an one as thy self, but I will reprove thee and set thy sins in order before thee.* If thou presumptuously shalt dare to think that God will therefore wink at thy sins, (in which thou still resolvest to continue) because he looks upon thy Saviours sufferings; know then assuredly that none of them shall be forgotten, but all shall be brought before thee, with all their sinful aggravations, to thy terrour here and thy condemnation hereafter.

Secondly, Let this timely perswade thee to hate and abhor all sin even with a perfect hatred, which is thine utter and thy deadly enemy, the cause of thy sorrow in this life and of thine endless separation from God in that to come; to look upon it as it truly is most loathsome, odious and abominable in the sight of God, as directly opposite unto his own nature, most pernicious and destructive unto man, both in body and soul; as leading him from God, (the onely and eternal Center

of

of his quiet reſt and happineſs) into the cruel bondage and captivity of Satan, where (as the horſe in the mill) he is made to do his daily drudgery, even the obeying of his fleſh in the ſinful luſts thereof, unto the ſad performance whereof he is daily whip'd forward both by Satans temptations and his own corruptions. This (O thou preſumptuous ſinner) is the ſadneſs of thy preſent carnal condition; in which while thou art drudging at it, thou ſhalt find nothing elſe but foulneſs and deformity, emptineſs and vanity, wearineſs and miſery; until at laſt when thou haſt ended thy work thou ſhalt receive thy wages; even ſhame and ſorrow in this life and eternal death in that to come.

Thirdly, take heed thou quencheſt not the bleſſed motions of Gods holy Spirit in thee, but nouriſh and cheriſh them, as the gratious offers of eternity: O ſet not lightly by them, but look upon them as the wonderful and bleſſed condeſcentions of an offended God. Thou daily and preſumptuouſly goeſt on in thy rebellious courſes againſt him, yet he by theſe his frequent offers of Grace as daily ſeeks thee to be reconciled to him. Conſider, I pray thee, how wonderful his love is to thee; who by theſe his indeared motions, compaſſionately recalleth thee from ſin and ſorrow, affectionately inviteth thee to repentance, and thereby offers thee his gratious pardon, his fatherly love, his holy and ſafe protection, his comfortable peace, his preventing grace, and his enſuing glory: Remember, O remember that the bleſſed wind of Gods holy Spirit bloweth

but when and where it listeth, when it is once gone thou knowest not whether it shall ever return, that as there is a time of calling, so there will be a time of rejecting; *That God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens*, Rom. 9. If thou wilt yet farther harden thine own heart by resisting these his blessed motions in thee, he will most assuredly harden thee yet more and more by his most just withdrawing of his holy Spirit quite away from thee.

4. Consider yet farther, that if thou now findest it so difficult a matter to break off thy sins by thy repentance, how difficult thinkest thou wilt thou find it hereafter, when thy presumptuous sins, by their long and customary continuing with thee and imperious reigning over thee, (being now become exceeding sinful) are thereby far deeper rooted in thee, the Devil (by thy long subjection to him) in more firm and sure possession of thee, and God himself (by reason of thy stubborn heart) removed farther off from thee? O be not deceived therefore, in judging it so easie a matter to repent when thou wilt, for thou wilt (to thy sorrow) find, that the more blows thou driveſt in the nail of sin withal, the harder thou wilt find it to be drawn, the deeper thou art plunged in this filthy mire, the more difficult it will be for thee to get out: O think it not therefore enough for thee, upon thy gripes and stings of conscience, to hang down thy head like a bull-rush for a day, and then again with the Dog to return to thy filthy vomit: Deceive not thy self, for this is so far from

from the cure, that it is only the corrosive of sin; insomuch as thou grievest not as a gratious child for displeasing of thy good and loving Father; but, as a guilty malefactor, fearing the severe sentence of a just and angry Judge: Nay, thou mayst go yet much farther, and yet come far short of that sincerity of heart which God requireth of thee, in this blessed performance; thou mayst with *Saul* express thy sorrow with thy tears, thou mayst with *Demas* readily and chearfully begin in the Spirit, and yet afterward fall away to the flesh: Thou mayst with those believers, in the Gospel, receive the word with joy and for a time be made partaker of the comfort of the holy Spirit, and yet afterward, by the heat of temptations be wither'd away and become unfruitful in this blessed work of repentance. Alas, my mistaken friend, what will it avail thee to bewail that sin which thou wilt not forgo? As ever therefore thou hopest to obtain pardon, and thereby to enjoy rest and peace in thy unquiet conscience, let there be a total renovation of the inward man. Remember that our Saviour tells thee, *Matt.*7.21. *That it is not every one that crieth Lord, Lord, shall inherit the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven*; Gods will must be done readily and chearfully and faithfully and constantly, if thou failest but in any one of these thou doest it but by halves, and so in effect not at all: God will either have thy whole heart or no part of it; thou canst not serve God and *Belial*. O let it therefore be the very joy of thy heart, the very life of thy soul

to

to be always ready to do his will: Set therefore timely and seriously upon this blessed work of true repentance, give up with joy thy soul and body as a living sacrifice to God: This is not the work of nature but of grace; pray therefore earnestly and often unto God to give it thee; be humble for thy former transgressions, & fervent in present petitions, & then assure thy soul thou canst not want a blessing; if the entrance be harsh to the flesh, the progress will be sweet to the Spirit, and thou wilt then (with true comfort) say, that thou findest more true pleasure in one hour thus spent than in an age of pleasure.

And in the last place, as a bridle to restrain thee from sin, and a spur to prick thee forward to Repentance, think seriously and often of thy hour of death, and of the very near approach of the day of Judgement; by the one thou wilt be put in mind, that the fashion of this world passeth and shall never return; that thy pretious time passeth and shall shortly be no more; that thou must shortly give up an account of thy stewardship, for that thou shalt be then no longer steward: By the other, that thou art shortly passing out of time into eternity, where thou shalt receive thy reward for the works which thou hast done in the flesh, whether they are good, or whether they are evil, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. Thy reward for those that are good, in & by the merits of thy Saviour, in & thorough whom they are both gratiously accepted, & gloriously rewarded: thy reward for thy bad, in each degree proportiable to thine own deserts: So that as the righteous shall enjoy their degrees

grees of glory in heaven ſuitable to their degrees of obedience unto Chriſt upon earth, and ſo ſhall out-ſhine one another in Glory; ſo likewiſe ſhall the Reprobates moſt aſſuredly ſuffer their degrees of puniſhments in hell, for their degrees of rebellion againſt Chriſt, while they were in the body, and ſo ſhall exceed one another in torments.

Theſe timely admonitions, and pious conſiderations will put a damp (I hope) upon thy ſinful and inflam'd deſires, and much abate thy forwardneſs to ſin. If the end of all things were at hand in the Apoſtles days, upon whom as S. *Paul* ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 10. 11. *The ends of the world were come*, it muſt moſt certainly be very near in our days upon whom the end of thoſe ends is come: and if theſe things be ſo, (as moſt certainly they are) what manner of perſons ought we to be in all holineſs and righteouſneſs of lives and converſations. Let this therefore move thee, to have mercy on thy ſelf in thy ſpeedy return unto God: *Return, return* (ſaith God himſelf unto thee, *Ezek.* 33.) *For why will ye die O houſe of Iſrael?* Conſider ſeriouſly of what thou now readeſt, while God hath given thee yet time and grace to conſider, and the Lord in mercy lay it ſo home unto all our hearts, that of Carnal we may become wholly Spiritual; and delight not onely to walk, but alſo to run the bleſſed race of his Commandments, with holy conſtancy, and happy fervency to our lives end.

THE

THE PRAYER.

O Thou Father of mercies and God of all consolations, from whose alone rich mercy and goodness it is that I am alive this hour to kneel before thee, and have yet leave to cry to thee for mercy, who have thus long, thus wickedly, thus daringly, thus presumptuously rebell'd against thee: Lord, if thou shalt mark what I have done amiss, I am not able to abide it, but thou O Lord hast graciously promised, that upon my return unto thee, thou wilt blot out all my sins and remember them no more. Blessed Lord I desire earnestly and heartily to return unto thee; Lord accept of me, and interpose the merits of thy blessed Son for me, that so I may appear a spotless soul before thee: Blessed and for ever blessed be thy holy name, that by thy saving grace, I now find my many and my grievous sins to be a weighty burthen upon me, too heavy for me to bear; O ease me of it for thy pretious promise sake in Christ, whom thou hast freely given to bear the iniquities of us all, that timely turn to thee by true repentance and amendment of our evil ways: that so by this refreshment of my weary soul, I may again receive the voice of joy and gladness, even that comfortable voice of thee my ever blessed Saviour, Be of good chear for thy sins are forgiven thee. O my God, my God, I am yet desolate in comfort, and poor in spiritual refreshments, and my sad heart is wounded within me; O when wilt thou come unto me by the gracious and much long'd for visits of thy holy Spirit, that the bones which thou hast broken (even my strong confidence by faith in thee and thy Christ) may rejoyce? Make haste O

Lord

Lord to hear me, make haſt, O Lord, to help me, for I am ſunk into the deep myre of ſin where no ſtay is; and there is none elſe to deliver me: Have mercy upon me O Lord, have mercy upon me, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies towards me, blot out all mine offences: Holy Father I willingly confeſs my ſelf to be a great and grievous ſinner; Lord I am now ready to ranſack the very ſecrets of my heart, that I may unboſom all my ſins unto thee; I moſt gladly confeſs them, I am grieved for them, I heartily repent of them, I deſire earneſtly and reſolve faithfully to forſake them, I perfectly hate and utterly abhor them: Lord inſomuch as thou requireſt not more of me, be now graciouſly pleaſed to be merciful unto me: It is thou O Lord alone, that haſt made me ſenſible of this my great miſery, and thou alone canſt make me capable of that thy rich and endleſs mercy; unto that mercy therefore I apply my ſelf for pardon: O thou bleſſed fountain of eternal love, who deſireſt not the death of me a miſerable ſinner, but rather that I ſhould repent and live, have mercy on me; O thou bleſſed ſhepheard of my ſoul that cameſt to ſeek thoſe that were loſt, lead me thy loſt ſheep home unto thy bleſſed fold; and keep me ſafely there, that I never hereafter ſtray away from thee: O thou bleſſed comforter of all thoſe weary ſouls that cry to thee for ſuccour and relief, relieve and comfort me: Lord ſave me or I periſh, Lord comfort me or I faint, Lord ſeek me or I am loſt for ever: Create in me a clean heart O Lord, and renew a right ſpirit within me, waſh me thoroughly (in the bloud of Chriſt) from all my ſins; and from daring and preſumptuous ſins, good Lord deliver me. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the ſweetneſs, eaſineſs and pleaſantneſs of the ways of God; wherein is plainly diſcovered the falſity of the ſuppoſed difficulty and uncomfortableneſs thereof.

WHen upon the ſight of thy former tranſgreſſions, and the deep ſenſe of the ſadneſs of thy loſt condition thereby; and now (the Lord being merciful unto thee, in ſnatching thee away from this thy long lingering in this filthy *Sodom*,) thou art fully purpoſed to break off thy ſins by true and timely repentance, and to lead a ſtrict, ſober, and religious life; ſuch is the implacable malice of Satan (and the weakneſs of thy corrupt nature in yielding too eaſily to his temptations) that when he finds thee breaking looſe from him, and that thereby he can no longer corrupt thine actions, he will then ſtrongly labour to divert thine intentions, by perſwading of thee, that the ways of God are full of trouble and anxiety, of ruggedneſs and extream difficulty, that by this auſterity of life, thy life will prove uncomfortable; that if thou entereſt upon this ſevere courſe, thou wilt never be able to hold out, and that therefore it were much better for thee never to begin: Theſe with ſuch like are the pretended obſtacles that have hindered many a ſoul from coming

coming unto Chriſt; for the removal whereof, I have here provided for thee ſuch ſpiritual helps as (by Gods bleſſing) will both eaſily remove them, and give thee heavenly comfort in removing of them.

And here I deſire thee to conſider, that (as the Apoſtle tells thee, 1 *Cor.* 2. 15.) *The carnal man diſcerneth not the things of God, neither indeed can, for they are ſpiritually diſcerned*: ſo that it will be needful for thee in the firſt place to go wholly out of thy ſelf (that is out of thy carnal and corrupt deſires) into God by ſpiritual regeneration, that ſo thereby thou mayſt be ſpiritually able to behold with holy *David*, the lovelineſs, the ſweetneſs, the eaſieneſs, and the delightful pleaſantneſs of all the ways of God, that ſo thou mayſt with him alſo intirely love them, and exceedingly delight in them, and then thou wilt with comfort find, that with him alſo thou ſhalt not only be well able to walk in them with eaſe and ſafety, but alſo to run in them with much pleaſure and delight: for all the ways of God are mercy and truth; mercy to refreſh our ſouls in all his heavenly paths with the fragrant odours of eternity of happineſs; truth to direct and guide us in theſe his bleſſed paths, and by fatherly chaſtiſements to recal us home when at any time we wander from him.

No ſooner art thou entred into theſe the bleſſed paths of God which lead thee to thy reſt and quietneſs, but thou mayſt here with comfort clearly ſee the vaſt and joyful diſproportion between the vain delights, afforded formerly in thy ways of ſin and ſhame,

and

and these of holiness and endless happiness; whereby thou mayst be fully satisfied, (as God himself hath told thee, *Ezek.* 33.) that these his ways are equal, and thine own unequal; that those are dark, slippery and full of extream danger, and that these are lightsom, firm, and every way secure. Thou hadst there the Devil and thine own corruptions to seduce thee, thou hast here Gods holy Angels to protect thee, his holy word to be a light unto thee, his holy Spirit to direct thee, his rod of chastisements and afflictions to recal thee, his staff of consolations to uphold thee, and which is yet much more, his holy eye of providence, even thy God himself continually to watch over thee, that no evil surprise thee. When thou there stumbledst and didst fall, thou hadst no eye to pity thee, no bowels of compassion to bewail thee, no hand of comfort to relieve thee: When (thorough infirmity) thou here fallest, thou hast Gods hand of mercy in Christ Jesus to support thee, and his fatherly compassions to mourn over thee, from whence it is that holy *David* tells thee, *Psal.* 37. 24. *Though the righteous man fall he shall not be cast away, for the Lord upholdeth him*; yea so gratiously upholdeth him, *that where sin hath abounded there grace shall abound much more.* O blessed comfort of the truly regenerate man, that walketh sincerely in these blessed ways of God, unto whom all things in this life, even the very malice of the Devil, even his own very closest corruptions, even his very sins shall work to advantage.

If notwithstanding all this thou shalt with

S. Paul

S. *Paul* object, that thou findeſt a law in thy members rebelling againſt the law of thy mind, and leading thee captive to the law of ſin, and that thereby thou findeſt the entrance into theſe holy paths ſo exceeding difficult, the progreſs therein ſo inſuperable, the combat between the fleſh and the ſpirit ſo painful, and the victory to be gained ſo impoſſible, that thou haſt not Chriſtian courage enough to attempt it, but hadſt rather truſt God with thy failings, than ſerve him with ſuch ſmart conflicts and diſturbances; I muſt then tell thee that this thy weak and ſinful diſtruſt is occaſioned by thy darkened underſtanding, which (being yet uncapable of ſpiritual light) is not able to diſcern thoſe heavenly helps, which God (whom thou willingly ſerveſt) in much mercy hath provided for thee; whereby thou mayſt be able both to fight and overcome, even the moſt potent oppoſitions, both of the Devil and thine own corruptions: But when God ſhall once give thee that ſpiritual eye-ſight, which the darkneſs of thy carnal heart cannot yet comprehend, thou wilt then (with much comfort) clearly behold, (with thoſe in *Elizeus* his time the Prophet) that there are far more with thee than againſt thee: for the comfortable aſſurance whereof, take along with thee theſe following conſiderations.

Conſider firſt, thou haſt the Grace of God to thine aſſiſtance (whoſe power is unreſiſtable) which he hath faithfully and freely promiſed to thoſe that are his, and willingly and chearfully ingage in this his ſpiritual combate: Remember

member his promiſe to S. *Paul*, when he beſought the Lord thrice that the temptation might be removed from him, 2 *Cor.* 12. *Sufficit tibi gratia mea; my grace is ſufficient for thee*; by which heavenly ſuccour (which is never wholly wanting unto Gods children,) thou ſhalt be able boldly to affirm with him, *Philip.* 4. that in and thorough Chriſt (that is his grace aſſiſting) thou canſt do all things; and if ſo, then overcome thereby the ſtrongeſt of thy ſtrong temptations: and with him alſo to declare with Chriſtian confidence, *Rom.* 8. 38. *That neither death nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other creature ſhall be able to ſeparate thee from the love of God in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* All this and (if poſſible) much more than this, thou mayſt with comfort ſay, from the ſweet and ſafe aſſurance of this Divine ſupporting grace, whereby thou ſhalt aſſuredly be comforted, in all the afflictions, infirmities, temptations, perſecutions, and whatſoever elſe this preſent life can bring upon thee; in all which thou mayſt with comfort alſo ſay with him, that thorough him that hath loved us (by giving this his heavenly grace unto us) thou art more than Conqueror: For by his bleſſed help, thou ſhalt with S. *Paul*, *Rom.* 6. find the old man (the rebellious luſts of the fleſh) to be crucified in thee, to the end the body of ſin may be deſtroyed; and thou no more in bondage to it. How canſt thou now fear, when thou ſeeſt thine enemy (thine own corruptions) lie dead before thee? How canſt thou

now

now grieve to part with nature (in the sinful desires thereof) to inherit grace, with all its heavenly treasures? If thou canst not willingly forgo all to enjoy Christ, thou art not worthy of him.

Consider in the next place how easie this combate will be made unto thee by the help of Divine Love. When *Jacob* served a double servitude for *Rachel*, they seemed unto him but a very few days, because he loved her, saith the text, *Gen.* 29. this is that (next unto the grace of God, from whence (as from the fountain) all other gifts and graces flow) that makes Christs yoke so sweet, and his burden so light unto us, and all the ways of his commandments both pleasant and delightful: by this all thine affections (the feet of thy soul by which thou walkest chearfully in these paths of life) are now become wholly pliable to the Divine will, and joyfully contented to obey his holy Commands; and by this thou wilt assuredly find, thy faith in his promises to be lively, thy hope in his mercies strong and vigorous, thy joy in his presence most sweet and ravishing, thy grief in his absence intollerable, thy longings for him insatiate, and thy desires towards him divinely passionate; so that thy thirsty soul for Christ will now (with joy) proclaim that thou art sick of love; and that without the kisses of his mouth (the blessed visits of his holy Spirit) thou canst not rest contented. So that thou mayst now well reckon with S. *Paul*, *Rom.* 8. 18. That all the sufferings of this present life, (and amongst them those of thy corrupt and carnal affections) are not worthy

thy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us.

Conſider yet farther for thy comfort and incouragement in this thy holy engagement, that thou enjoyeſt hereby the bleſſed light of Gods holy Spirit, to refreſh and comfort thee, the peace of thine own conſcience, (even that bleſſed peace of God, which paſſeth all our underſtanding) to quiet and content thee; and that bleſſed hope of reward in Chriſt Jeſus, which the Lord the righteous judge hath promiſed thee, to revive and rejoyce thee. Comfort thy ſelf therefore with theſe words, and enter timely and with Chriſtian courage on this bleſſed work.

PIOUS ADMONITIONS

Upon the preceding Meditations.

SEeing that the holy Apoſtle S. *James* teacheth us, *Jam.* 1. 17. That *every good and perfect gift cometh from above from the father of light*; (this being not the work of nature but of grace) let me in the firſt place admoniſh thee, to make thine humble & thine earneſt addreſſes unto him by prayer, to enlighten the darkneſs of thy carnal underſtanding, by the happy light of his holy Spirit in thy heart, that thou mayſt thereby clearly ſee and faithfully believe the richneſs, pleaſantneſs, and true contentedneſs of theſe his heavenly paths, that ſo thy entrance may be ſafe, thy progreſs ſweet, and thy end bleſſed.

Let no vain pretences or barren excuſes of thy

thy sinful and corrupt nature obstruct thee, in this thy holy undertaking: the entrance may perhaps seem harsh to flesh and blood, but when thou hast by grace resisted this thy first and strongest temptation, thou wilt afterward to thy comfort find thy way therein to be both easie, and delightful, and the blessed end thereof eternal happiness.

When thou happily feelest the blessed motions of Gods holy Spirit working sweetly in thee; O grieve it not (that now offers thee the seal of thy redemption) by thy stubborn and rebellious resistance of it, but gladly nourish and cherish it, first by thy chearful welcoming and entertaining of it; Secondly, by thy ready obedience to it; and thirdly, by thy gratious perseverance in this thy willing obedience, in thy chearful and upright walking in these his blessed ways to thy lives end.

Be sure to reckon daily with thy conscience, that thou mayst thereby know how fair thy *audit* stands for heaven, and where thou seest thy self failing, beg presently for pardon: by this thy constant course, thou wilt not onely much indear Gods holy Spirit to continue its abode with thee, but also more and more remove the danger of temptations from thee. Sin is of an incroaching nature, and by its smooth perswasions will not easily be answered: if thou canst afford to welcome little sins, thou wilt soon consent to greater; if it sleep with thee in thy bosom all night, it will expect to dwell there: Let no sinful thought therefore pass thee without a godly check; no sinful word without a pious retractation; no

ſinful action without a ſincere humiliation: when thou art thus armed, thou wilt be able to withſtand the onſets of thy ſtrongeſt enemy; if (for want of theſe holy Guards) thou art found naked, the weakeſt will foil thee. And if Satan ſhall indeavour to divert thee from this bleſſed courſe by perſwading of thee, that by this ſevere courſe, thy life will prove uncomfortable; let this his falſe ſuggeſtion the more incourage thee, as knowing well that this which he oppoſeth moſt muſt needs be excellent: for if thy corrupt nature be dejected, grace will be ſtrengthened, and as grace increaſeth here ſo ſhall glory hereafter.

Be daily converſant and conſtant in the holy exerciſes of the heavenly graces; this happy courſe will make them grow ſtrong and vigorous in thee: and if at any time thou feeleſt any touch of ſpiritual pride within thee ariſing from thy ſpiritual indowments, remember with humility of heart, that thou haſt nothing but what thou haſt received, and if thou haſt received it, be humble under it, and thankful for it. Nouriſh thy faith daily by the ſweetneſs of the promiſes, and pray often and earneſtly for increaſe of comfort in them. Where prayer is wanting, there faith will be wavering, and where prayer is cold, there prayer will be comfortleſs: be therefore often and earneſt with God in prayer, that thou mayſt be ſtrong in faith, that ſo thy hope alſo may be lively, thy love to God and his commandments perfect, and thy hatred againſt ſin deadly. When thou art once heartily in love with Chriſt, this happy courſe will not at all be

be burdenſome unto thee; thou wilt then think no pains too great, no coſt too much to dreſs thy ſoul that ſhe thereby may appear lovely in his eye, who hath loved her from all Eternity.

THE PRAYER.

O Moſt ſweet and ever bleſſed Jeſus, the living fountain of my joy, the bleſſed Author of my comfort, the moſt gratious beginner, willing continuer and conſtant preſerver of my inward, and my outward conſolations: my rich and quiet reſt, and bleſſed end of my deſires: conduct me ſafely I beſeech thee, out of thoſe dark and unknown paths of my ſinful and corrupt nature which lead to ruine and deſtruction, into theſe bleſſed and delightſome ways of holineſs, which guide to everlaſting happineſs: O make me now to ſee and joyfully believe that there is no true ſweetneſs but in goodneſs, no true joy but in godly ſorrow, no true peace but in this holy and continual war, no true eaſe but by laying on the heavy load of ſin upon me, in the guilt thereof; that I may come to thee for ſuccour and relief: That in all the travel and wearineſs of life, there is no true reſt but in thee; that in all the terrors and amazements of death there is no true ſafety but in thee; that thou O Lord art all in all unto me; that thou art that bleſſed way that leadeth unto life eternal; that thou art that bleſſed truth that guideth to this bleſſed way; and that thou art that life eternal, in whom whoſoever believeth, although he were dead, yet he ſhall live; and that whoſoever liveth and be-

believeth in thee ſhall never die. Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief. O perfect thou this thine own work which thou haſt thus gratiouſly begun in me, ſtrengthen my weak faith, quicken my hope, inflame my love, that I may faithfully ſerve thee, ſavingly know thee, intirely love thee, truly enjoy thee, and eternally live with thee; grant this ſweet Jeſus for thy pretious promiſe ſake unto me. Amen.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the true repentance never to be repented of, and the great danger in deferring of it.

THE main end and ſcope of all that hitherto hath been ſpoken, having been onely to reclaim thee from ſin and ſorrow, and by true and timely repentance, to lead thee unto Chriſt and Chriſtian conſolation; I think it now needful in the next place to ſhew thee what true repentance is; leſt being miſtaken by its counterfeits, thou ſhouldſt reſt thy ſelf ſecure in the vain ſhews and empty ſhadows of it, and thereby deceive thy ſelf, both of thy preſent ſafety in him, and thy hope of future glory by him: For the comfortable prevention whereof, I ſhall now indeavour to lay down before thee ſuch plain and full directions, as (by Gods bleſſing upon them) will guide thee ſafely to him ſo as thou mayſt happily and ſweetly enjoy him, and in him, all that full and ſatisfying content, that will invite thee willing-

willingly, and chearfully, and joyfully, and thankfully, to forsake all (even thy best beloved) sins and follow him, and to account all things with S. *Paul* (even the most inticing pleasures of this life) but loss & dung in compare of the richness of the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord: which that thou mayst both say and do, observe with me (I pray thee) these following directions; which the Lord in much mercy sanctifie unto us both, and unto all those that truly and sincerely love him, and earnestly desire communion with him.

This holy and heavenly grace (the blessed foundation of the happy building of sanctification unto righteousness) is by carnal believers much talked of, little known and less practised: By most men too commonly mistaken, for a short and perfunctory act of sorrow for sin for the time present, without serious thoughts and solemn promises of amendment for that to come: By many for the bare and barren act of humiliation for sin; without the blessed fruits of mortification to sin, regeneration to holiness, and sanctification to righteousness; by some, (and those too many,) for a late and lazie coming unto God for mercy and forgiveness, when they are neither sure of grace to beg for it, of hope to obtain it, of faith to receive it, nor of time to enjoy it. These are the sad and woful counterfeits of true repentance, which (with horrour and amazement of soul) shall ever be repented of, when time shall be no more.

He therefore that desireth truly and heartily

to repent him of his sins, and for ever afterward to lead a sober and religious life, must resolve seriously to go out of himself into God, by his holy denial of himself in all his carnal and corrupt affections; of carnal to become wholly spiritual, to die daily unto sin, by crucifying the flesh and all the sinful lusts thereof, and by this his new birth in Christ, to increase daily more and more in sanctification to righteousness and true holiness, until at last by this his Christian courage in fighting the Lords battels, (even those spiritual fights against his fleshly corruptions) with gratious perseverance in the same, he may with joy and confidence proclaim himself a blessed victor with S. *Paul*, and say triumphantly with him, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. *I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my course* (with joy;) *henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not unto me onely but unto all those that love and expect the day of his appearing.*

Now insomuch as repentance is the gift of God, as the holy Prophet *Jeremiah* tells thee, *Lam* 5. 21. where he saith, *Turn us O Lord and we shall be turned*, so that, thou canst not of thy self come unto the Lord, (who art spiritually dead) unless he draw thee by those blessed motions of his ever blessed Spirit, not only to come unto him by true and hearty repentance, but also to run after him by holiness of life and conversation: Let it therefore be thy first work to be instant, and even importunate with him in prayer, that thou mayst now

now at last come mournfully unto him by repentance, and be happily converted. In the blessed merits of thy Saviour, who came into the world to seek and to save thee a miserable sinner, thou hast free acces unto the throne of grace: be chearful therefore in this holy duty, and assure thy self with comfort, that there was never yet any needy soul, that begg'd faithfully and heartily an alms of mercy of Gods hand, and went away denied. Let thy Petitions therefore be faithful and fervent, and they cannot return empty.

The next step in this holy path ought to be thy godly sorrow for thy sins; which must be much more grieving of thee for their guilt, than frighting of thee for their punishment; far greater for displeasing God thy good and gracious Father, than for offending him thy just and righteous judge: if thy grief for sin be not thus qualified, thou wilt soon have cause to repent of this thy repentance, as false, sinful and deceitful. If thou seekest God by repentance out of thy slavish fear of his judgments, which thy many sins have most justly deserved to be inflicted on thee; thou lovest but thy self in him, and mayst therefore most justly fear never to be loved of him. If therefore thou findest any such slavish fear in these thy sinful thoughts, give them a sudden check, and call presently to thy remembrance the greatness, richness and eternity of Gods fatherly affections towards thee; his compassionate bemoaning of thee when thou wert strayed from him; his gratious and his often inviting of thee unto mercy and forgiveness; his won-

derful patience and long-suffering towards thee, in waiting thy return unto him; and his freely loving and most willing and merciful acceptance of thee when thou art come. These and the like holy considerations (if thou hast not an heart of stone) will melt it into filial grief for thy so often grieving of God's holy Spirit, by thy ungratious resisting thereof; and thine eyes into tears, for thy so long displeasing him so good and merciful a Father. When thou art thus truly seasoned with sorrow, thou mayest assure thy soul that this thy broken and thy contrite heart thy God will not despise.

When thy heart is thus truly seasoned with godly sorrow for thy sins, thy next work must be, to make a serious, solemn, and particular confession of them with all their sinful aggravations of their several natures, degrees, relapses, and continuances, and other sinful circumstances, that so they may appear even in thine own eyes, (as they are in Gods) exceeding sinful; and that thou mayst thereby judge thy self for them, that thou mayst not be judged of the Lord. This thine humble and penitental confession hath (to thy comfort) Gods gratious promise, and his faithful performance of thy pardon annexed to it, as the holy Apostle assures thee, 1 *John* 1.9 *If we confess and acknowledge our sins, God is gratious to forgive us our sins according to his promise.* Let it not therefore grieve thee to confess thy particular sins unto thy God, whose delight is in mercy, and is therefore both freely willing, and ever ready to forgive them; and if after this

this thy confeſſion of them unto God, thou art yet troubled with the dreadful apprehenſion of his wrath againſt thee for them; then make thy confeſſion of them to his lawful Miniſter, that thereby thou mayſt both enjoy the comfort of his counſel and his prayers for thee; which (if he be godly and his prayers fervent) may avail much. God hath given unto them, the power to bind and looſe, refuſe not therefore (if there be need) the means by Chriſt ordained, and thou canſt not miſs of the deſired end: Let it not at all trouble thee, to take the ſhame, ſo God may have the glory.

After this thy penitent confeſſion, it behoveth thee in the next place, to conſider of thy godly ſatisfaction. In the Law, *Numb.* 5. 6. when a treſpaſs was committed, God commanded the principal to be reſtored with the damage, and a fifth part more added thereunto; in the Goſpel S. *Pauls* charge is, *Rom.* 13. 8. *that we owe nothing to any man, but that we love one another*, Divine love is the fulfilling of the Law, therefore S. *John* farther telleth thee, 1 *John* 4. 20. *He that ſaith he loveth God and hateth his brother is a lyar*: How canſt thou love thy brother whom thou haſt wronged, and not reſtore unto him the damage thou haſt done him? and if Chriſt ſo loved thee, his enemy, as to give himſelf for thee, how much more oughteſt thou to love him whom thou haſt wronged, by reſtoring to him what thou haſt unjuſtly taken from him? If therefore thine ability be weak, let thy deſire be ſtrong, and doubt not but what is faithfully intended:

(when not possibly to be performed) will be gratiously accepted.

When thou hast thus gratiously begun thy acquaintance with God, make a happy confirmation of it by thy solemn vow to his service, with fervent prayer for his blessed assistance in thy holy performance of it, that so when he worketh with thee (by the blessed motions of his holy Spirit in thee) there may be nothing wanting: this will more firmly cement thy soul unto him, and fence thy sinful thoughts from straying from him. Gods gratious promises to thee, are all yea and *Amen*: Let thine to him be sincerely and faithfully intended, and then doubtless, although (thorough thy humane frailty) but weakly performed, God who especially accepteth of thy heart, will both pardon this thy weakness, and accept thy willingness.

This solemn tie upon thy soul will undoubtedly (by Divine assistance) beget in thee a perfect hatred of all sin, and a serious resolution of an holy revenge against it, which will make thee jealous even but of the very least appearance of evil, and of all occasions of allurements to it. Thy degrees of sin will now have their degrees of sorrow, thy large measure of pollution, thy larger of mortification to sin, and sanctification to righteousness, by thy gratious and constant setting of some hours apart for these thy private devotions, in which thou shalt find more satisfying comfort than in an age of pleasure. For hereby, sin thy mortal enemy will die daily more and more in thee, the temptations of Satan (by this holy resistance)

ance) depart farther off from thee, Gods holy gifts and graces be daily increaſed, thy carnal deſires diminiſhed, thy conſcience quieted, thy ſpiritual joy inlarged, and thy aſſurance in Chriſt moſt comfortably confirmed.

When by this thy bleſſed act of repentance thou haſt thus happily taken care for thine own ſoul; let thy Chriſtian care likewiſe extend it ſelf unto others: examine ſtrictly all thy ſpiritual ingagements to thy brother, and faithfully diſcharge them. Indeavour earneſtly to recal all thoſe who have ſinned by thy looſe example: If thou ſaveſt but one ſoul from death, thou ſhalt thereby (as S. *James* tells thee, *Jam.* 5. 20.) *cover a multitude of ſins*, both of thine own and others: ſtrive therefore timely to admoniſh, earneſtly to reclaim, religiouſly to counſel, compaſſionately to perſwade, and piouſly to inſtruct, all thoſe (eſpecially thy former companions in evil) who are either ſtill ſtrong in their ſins, or yet weak in the faith, to come in ſpeedily unto Chriſt and be ſaved. Be holily diligent and conſtant in diſcharge of theſe thy ſpiritual debts unto all; that ſo by any means (if poſſible) with holy *Paul*, thou mayſt gain ſome; and what thou canſt not accompliſh for want of fitting opportunities, indeavour to make good by thy devout ſupplications for them. When thou haſt thus gratiouſly made even thine accounts with God and man, and goeſt on chearfully, and joyfully, and conſtantly, in theſe the bleſſed paths of repentance, thou mayeſt aſſure thy ſoul, that thy repentance is ſincere and true, and that thy comfort therein will be ſweet,

thy peace undiſturbed, thy life happy, thy death pretious, thy reſurrection joyful, and thy reward for this thine obedience (in the alone merit of thy Saviour) both bleſſed and eternal.

PIOUS ADMONITIONS

Upon the preceding Meditations.

LET this (in the fear of God) admoniſh thee, to ſet timely and ſolemnly upon this bleſſed work, as the moſt weighty, neceſſary, and important, that belongeth to a diſconſolate and forlorn ſinner. O ſay not any longer, (with *Auſtine* before his converſion) *Cras, Cras*, to morrow, to morrow, but pray with him, that this may be the very hour of thy Converſion. Thy time is wholly in Gods hands, to diſpoſe of it as it ſeemeth beſt unto his godly wiſdom. This day thou art here, and the next thou mayſt be gone; as the graſs of the field, thou art ſoon cut down and withered, and thy place is no more found; thy days are but as a tale that is told, ſo ſuddenly (and without repentance ſo ſadly) thou art gone, and art no more ſeen: Let this therefore powerfully perſwade with thee, to work at this bleſſed work of repentance, while thou haſt yet time and grace allowed thee to ſet upon it, beg earneſtly of God, that thy heart may now be filled, thy ſoul be raviſhed, with holy contemplation of thy heavenly home, that no-

nothing may now delight thee, nothing content thee but the ſweet aſſurance of the pardon of thy ſins, and that thou haſt a bleſſed portion in the blood of Chriſt, where thy delights will be truly ſweet, and their injoyments bleſſed, ſafe, and eternal.

Beſide the ſhortneſs, ſwiftneſs, and uncertainty of life, in which alone thou haſt time allowed for repentance; think ſeriouſly and often of the terrours and amazements of a ſudden and an unprepared death, (unto which (if thou ſpeedily repenteſt not,) thou art every moment liable.) Remember that bleſſed warning of our Saviour, wherein all qualities, all ages, all degrees of ſinners are included, *Think ye* (ſaith he, *Luk.* 13.8.) *that thoſe upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, were greater ſinners than the reſt? Verily I tell you, nay, but except ye repent ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh*: Sin ever goeth before deſtruction; the judgment (without repentance) will moſt certainly come; the time when, that is, how ſuddenly, thou knoweſt not; even this very day, even this very hour (for ought thou knoweſt, or canſt hinder) thy ſinful ſoul may be required of thee. O let this therefore, yet farther, forewarn thee to ſet immediately upon this bleſſed work, even at this preſent while thou readeſt this: thou mayſt perhaps be ſenſible of ſome happy glimpſes of Gods holy ſpirit working ſweetly in thee, O quench them not by irreligious thoughts of longer delay; leſt if thou thinkeſt it too ſoon this day, thou mayſt (without much mercy ſhewed unto thee) find it too late to morrow: from which *too late*, the Lord, (by true

true and timely repentance) deliver thee.

Consider yet farther how many gratious calls thou hast already had to return unto thy God, and how rebelliously thou hast hitherto refus'd them all: consider likewise of the woful consequents of these refusals, and tremble at the dreadful apprehension of them; when thy time of calling is once past, it is past for ever; *I called unto you* (saith God) *and ye refused to come, I held out my hand and ye would not look toward me, therefore will I forsake you in your extremity; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you, then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer, they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me*, Prov. 1. 24, 27, 28.

Be warned therefore in time and repent, for know assuredly, that if thou wilt not imbrace mercy by Gods gratious and his frequent calls in this life, thou shalt exalt his Justice, (by his just forsaking of thee) in the life to come.

And in the last place, consider seriously, and timely, of the sweet and merciful nature of thy heavenly Father in his great and wonderful patience and long-suffering towards thee; that so (if possible) he may at last have mercy on thee; and let this, (by the Divine help of prayer for his heavenly grace) work powerfully upon thee: If thou hast but the least spark of filial love belonging to a gratious child remaining in thee, this love of God will soon inflame it into fervency of heat to him and his deserved glory: make no longer delays

lays therefore, but return ſpeedily unto him. Thou findeſt by thy ſelf in Nature that Patience provoked too much, turns into rage and fury; O tempt not the God of Vengeance therefore too far, but moſt certainly aſſure thy ſelf, that this his great patience and long-ſuffering towards thee in this life, will moſt aſſuredly (if thou ſtill kickeſt againſt him) exaſperate his fury and revenge againſt thee in the life to come: Be wiſe therefore in making ſure work for thy ſoul while thou haſt time and grace offered to do it. Thy gratious God, even while thou art reading this, gives thee yet (even by theſe lines) another call to return unto him. He now offers thee his gratious pardon for thy ſins, his free love in his gratious acceptance of thee, his invaluable peace in quieting thy guilty conſcience, his bleſſed protection in defending of thee from the rage of ſin and Satan, his ſaving and preventing grace, and his inſuing glory: Unleſs therefore thou art in love with thine own miſery (in thy loſt condition) refuſe them not, but thankfully, and joyfully accept of them, and repent.

THE PRAYER.

O *Thou bleſſed and eternal Father of all rich and endleſs mercies, and in Jeſus Chriſt the bleſſed author, joyful cheriſher, and comfortable finiſher, of the pretious Faith of thine Elect, who art infinitely, and eſſentially, and eternally Love, and therefore (as thou look'ſt on thy creature without ſin) hat'ſt nothing that thou haſt made; who haſt moſt mercifully manifeſted this thy love unto me, by giving me thine only Son to die for me; in whom thou mighteſt look upon me free from ſin, and both comely and amiable, in the lovelineſs of his perfections; who haſt alſo gratiouſly declar'd unto me, even by the Sacred oath of thine own eternal Being, that thou deſireſt not the death of me a miſerable ſinner, but rather that I ſhould repent and live; and who haſt farther promiſed that upon my return unto thee, thou wilt gratiouſly and willingly accept of me: Lord give me now at laſt, in this my great neceſſity, a true and ſaving Faith, that I may joyfully lay hold upon the ſaving merits of my bleſſed Saviour, in whom alone I may enjoy the ſweetneſs of theſe ſaving promiſes, and be at bleſſed peace and union with thee: Lord I have ſinned, and I heartily deſire to repent, I have lain long dead in ſin and cannot be now raiſed unto newneſs of life, without the bleſſed breathings of thy holy Spirit in me: With all humility of heart, and thankfulneſs of ſoul I joyfully acknowledge, that even theſe happy thoughts of my return are from thee alone: O perfect I*

meekly beſeech thee what thou haſt thus gratiouſly begun in me; Lord give me this thy ſaving grace of true, and timely repentance, and then take from me what thou wilt: even life it ſelf without thee in thy Chriſt is now bitterneſs unto me: Increaſe the gifts and graces of thy holy Spirit daily in me, and make them powerful to ſubdue the vain and ſinful motions of my corrupt affections; that ſo when thou haſt thus gratiouſly put that into me which thou requireſt of me, thou mayſt gratiouſly accept of me, and delight in me to do me good: Hear me O Lord, and help me, and in Jeſus Chriſt be merciful unto me, that I may willingly, and joyfully, and thankfully, forgo the ſinful pleaſures of this vain life, for his dear ſake, who loſt his pretious life for mine. Amen.

CHAP. IX.

Of the inticing enemies of the ſoul, the ſinful pleaſures and delights of the world, with holy helps to make reſiſtance in the hour of temptation.

WHen (by Divine aſſiſtance) thou haſt made an entrance into theſe bleſſed paths of repentance, and art now gratiouſly reſolved, to take up ſpiritual arms againſt thy carnal and corrupt affections: being thus happily broke looſe from thine Egyptian bondage of ſin, the vain and ſinful pleaſures and delights of this evil world, thy ſouls Task-maſters, to weary and oppreſs it; thou wilt

ſoon

ſoon find, that *Pharaoh* and his hoſt, the Devil with his ſtrongeſt temptations, will eagerly purſue thee, and (if poſſible) reduce thee to thy former bondage, by relapſing thee into thoſe ſinful pleaſures and delights, in which he hath already ſo long, ſo powerfully detained thee, and from which he hath already found thee ſo unwilling to depart: It mainly therefore concerns thee to be furniſhed with ſuch ſpiritual guards, as will both ſafely defend thee from theſe his dangerous aſſaults, and powerfully inable thee to vanquiſh and deſtroy the power and policy of this thy deadly enemy, with thoſe his potent troops of carnal pleaſures and delights; all which by the powerful help of Gods aſſiſting grace, thou ſhalt ſee utterly deſtroyed, and ruined, and thy ſelf ſafely paſſing on to thy deſired home, the place of reſt and quietneſs. Be ſtrong therefore in thy holy reſiſtance of theſe carnal temptations, and the Lord ſhall comfort thine heart with aſſurance of victory here, of triumph hereafter.

No ſooner art thou entered the field, but thou wilt find theſe fawning enemies, the vain delights and pleaſures of thy former ſinful life, which flatter to deſtruction, to give thee the firſt onſet, with a (*Demittes nos in æternum*?) wilt thou caſt us off for ever? wilt thou for ever part with all thoſe pleaſures and delights which formerly thou haſt enjoyed by us? wilt thou not cry yet a little more ſleep, yet a little more ſlumber, yet a little more folding of the hands together, in the pleaſing ſleep of ſenſual delights? Theſe are thoſe flattering

tering lips, thoſe falſe perſwaſions, that invite thee from thoſe rivers of eternal pleaſures, to theſe unwarrantable and ungodly worldly joys, that ſleep of ſin which (without mercy) leaves thee in the ſleep of death, even that dreadful ſecond death of ſoul and body; from which thou canſt not awake until thou ariſeſt to judgment: for the timely prevention whereof make uſe of theſe thy holy helps that follow.

Conſider firſt, in what relation thou now ſtandeſt to thy God; that thou haſt vowed thy ſelf a profeſſed enemy to all ungodlineſs, that thou haſt taken up ſpiritual arms under Chriſt thy ſpiritual leader, and haſt liſted thy ſelf his faithful ſouldier and ſervant to thy lives end: and then judge how great a ſhame it will be for thee, how great a diſhonour unto Chriſt thy Commander, if thou cowardly giveſt ground upon thine enemies aſſault: how much greater, if thou falſly forſakeſt thy Colours, even the bloody Croſs of thy bleſſed Saviour; and not only ſo, but moſt wickedly (by aſſenting to theſe foul temptations) takeſt up arms againſt him? O conſider this in time, and let not the ſmooth pretences of thine enemy delude thee. If theſe ſtoln waters ſhall ſeem ſweet unto thee, they will moſt certainly leave gravel in thy teeth: Look not therefore on them as they are coming toward thee with beauty and content in their faces, but as they are going from thee, with loathſomneſs and bitterneſs in their farewels: Thou haſt already had too ſad experience of them, by thy being formerly too much too long ſeduced by them:

them: look now upon them (as they truly are) as falſe and flatte ing, foul and deformed, empty and vain, ſhort and uncertain, toilſome and miſerable, and thou wilt then plainly ſee how much they are below that high born ſoul which God hath given thee, and have juſt cauſe to ſay of them, as holy *Job* of his falſe friends, *Miſerable comforters are ye all.*

Look now upon the filthy and polluted nature of theſe diſturbers of the peace of *Iſrael*, and thou ſhalt plainly ſee them to be that ſticking pitch that defiles where it touches or is touched, thoſe misbecoming ſpots and blemiſhes (of that nobler part of man) thy ſoul, by which pollution ſhe muſt needs appear moſt loathſome, odious and abominable in the eyes of God, and muſt therefore (as ſhe is thus out of Chriſt) be hated of him, as moſt oppoſite to his Divine Nature who is purity it ſelf, and therefore cannot now behold it thus defiled, but with holy deteſtation: neither is thy ſoul only blemiſhed but alſo wounded by them, and thoſe wounds too, ſo deep and dangerous, ſo painful and diſturbing, as thou art not well able to bear; and which is yet a far greater puniſhment and affliction upon thee, as they put thee unto moſt intollerable pain by the continual ſmarting of thy conſcience, ſo they likewiſe deprive thee of all ſpiritual comfort, by choaking that bleſſed ſeed of grace which God had ſowed in thy heart, ſo that it becomes unfruitful, as Chriſt himſelf tells thee, in that his parable of the ſower, *Matth.* 13. 7. Theſe are the ſad performances of all thoſe ſweet and pleaſing promiſes which the

the deceitful sinful pleasures of this life do fairly make unto thee; whose beginning is folly, and whose end damnation: they cry unto thee *Peace, Peace,* when *there is no peace to the wicked saith my God;* when sudden destruction is coming upon thee: when they present thee (as *Jael* did *Sisera*) with their milk and butter of delight and contentation, they most assuredly, (without Gods greater mercy to thee) will nail thy sleepy soul to death and desolation. Thus while they smile they betray thee unto death or extream danger of it: When they frown (when thou leavest them or they thee) they afflict thee by a wasted body, and a wounded soul; and as if all this were not yet enough to make thee wretched enough by them, all that thou canst enjoy with them is meer emptiness and nothing; thy pleasure folly, thy laughter madness; their seeming substance is a meer shadow, and their false rest unquietness; their beauty's vain, they present themselves lovely, but depart foul and deformed; their promise is vain, they promise thee thy much desired *Rachel*, thy joy and delight, but put thee off with bleer eyed *Leah*, the discontents and troubles of an afflicted mind: their injoyment's much more vain; thou expectest pleasure and delight to content thee, but shalt find nothing else in them but weariness and sorrow to disturb thee. So that if thou sinfully consentest to the false allurements of the riches, honours, pleasures, profits or seducing merriments of this bewitching world, thou wilt have just cause to say with *David*, *Psal.* 39. 6. that *thou walkest in a*

(vain)

(vain) *shadow, and disquietest thy self in vain*; and with *Isaiah* the 59. that *thou hast put thy trust in things that are not, and hast conceived labour, and brought forth iniquity*; and lastly, with *Solomon, Eccles.* 1. (the wisest of men, and therefore best able to discover the deceit of sinful pleasures) *Vanitas vanitatum*, and *Omnia vanitas: vanity of vanities, all is vanity*: even the very greatest and most extream of all that is imaginable to be vain and vexing in this vale of misery.

Consider yet farther of the great danger of thy relapsing into sin: if thou fallest away in the hour of temptation, it will plainly evidence unto thee, that the blessed seed of grace had but shallow rooting in thy heart, when the blade so soon withereth with the heat of temptation, and that thou art not that good ground which thy Saviour speaks of, *Matth.* 13 8. *which bringeth forth fruit* (the blessed fruit of obedience) *in some thirty, in some sixty, in some an hundred fold.* Remember, that S. *John* tells thee, 1 *John* 2. 15. that *if thou lovest the vain things of the world the love of the father is not in thee*; Remember that thy Saviour tells thee, *John* 17. 16. That neither he nor his, are of this world: If therefore thou art wedded unto any thing of the sinful pleasures and delights of this life, so as to be perswaded and seduced by them, thou art none of Christs Disciple. Be not divided therefore between the Spirit and the flesh, but mortifie the deeds of the flesh by the Spirit, that thou mayst live: Christ will not be served by halves, he will either have thy whole

whole heart, or no part of it.

Think next of the sad and dangerous effects of relapsing into sin, which will render the diseases of thy soul more dangerous, and their remedies more difficult. This seeming sweetness unto which thou art now invited, must cost thee much true sorrow, disturbance of body, distraction of mind, unquietness of heart, dejectedness of spirit: of which thou hast the sad example of the perplexed Prophet *David*, watering his couch with his tears, and even roaring out for the very unquietness of his heart: And which is the chief of all the very saddest of these sad effects, the sad departing of Gods holy Spirit from thee, which farther made him to cry out, *Psal. 77. vers. 7, 8, 9. Will the Lord absent himself for ever, and will he shew no more favour? is his mercy clean gone for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gratious, and hath he shut up his tender mercy in displeasure?* These are the sad effects of sinful pleasures, by which who ever is beguiled, is not wise.

In the last place consider of the noble extract of thy Soul, in whose most blessed image created, with what glorious Sovereignty invested, with what Divine faculties indued, with what sublime knowledge inlightened, unto whom most richly espoused, with what costly robes arrayed, with what rich Jewels adorned, and unto what inheritance adopted: God is thy heavenly Father, in whose image of holiness and Sovereignty thou wert happily created, that thou mightest be holy as he is holy, and thereby be also happy as he is happy; that thou mightest also be Sovereign

vereign Lord, both of the creature and thine own affections, to rule and govern them as loyal and obedients ſubjects, that ſo reaſon might command paſſion, and grace over-rule nature: The ſupream excellency of thy ſublime knowledge is to know God, and in him thine own eternal happineſs, the bleſſed and the only end of thy creation: Chriſt Jeſus is the bleſſed bridegroom of thy ſoul, with the pretious robe of whoſe own righte uſneſs thou art moſt richly arrayed, with whoſe Divine graces moſt coſtly adorned, unto whoſe moſt bleſſed and eternal inheritance (even thoſe happy manſions of thy heavenly countrey moſt gloriouſly prepared for thee) moſt juſtly intitled: Wilt thou now (with prophane *Eſau*) loſe all this, for a meſs of Pottage, for a vain, ſhort, ſinful ſeeming pleaſure? whoſe beginning is folly, whoſe continuance ſhame, whoſe end miſery: O conſider I earneſtly beg of thee, and again I ſay conſider (as a matter of the greateſt moment to thee) how great a ſin thou committeſt (in yielding to temptations) by diſhonouring thy God, in defacing this his holy image, and in debaſing this thine own Sovereignty, to the ſlavery of ſin and Satan: in darkening the bright beams of thine illuminated underſtanding, by the miſty clouds of ſenſuality: in loſing thy firſt love, thy ſweet and chaſte imbraces of thy bleſſed Saviour, and proſtituting thy deſires unto a ſtranger, the ſinful pleaſures and delights of worldly vanities: by defiling this thy wedding garment, with the ſpots and blemiſhes of ſin and ſhame: in pawning all thy pretious Jewels of his

his heavenly graces, for the baſe counterfeits of carnal delights. And laſt of all, which is the ſumme of all, in loſing Chriſt, the bleſſed bridegroom of thy ſoul, and all his heavenly treaſures, for the vain and empty ſhadows of the falſe and ſinful pleaſures of this preſent world. Be ſtrong therefore, and reſiſt the fowlneſs of theſe cloſe temptations; if the combat be ſharp, the conqueſt will be ſweet: ſay therefore cheerfully with the ſpouſe in the *Canticles, Cant.*5.3. *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I fowl them?* I have put off my filthy garment of ſin and uncleanneſs, how ſhall I again return unto it? I have waſhed the feet of my carnal affections in the pretious blood of my bleſſed Saviour, by whoſe perfect obedience (which hath fully ſatisfied for my diſobedience) they are now become white as ſnow; how ſhall I again fowl them with the filthy mire of ſin and uncleanneſs? When thou art thus bleſſedly reſolved, by this thy ſpiritual reſiſtance, thy ſpiritual enemy will ſoon give ground, and thou ſhalt both have courage in the fight, and triumph in the victory.

HOLY CAUTIONS

Upon the preceding Meditations.

BEware of holding conference with Satan, eſpecially touching ſuch ſubjects of mental diſcourſes as appear moſt dangerous to thy

conſtitution: for which very cauſe it is that S. *Paul* warneth thee, 1 *Cor.* 6. 18. (not to fight againſt but) *to fly fornication*; as well knowing, that the frailty of the fleſh may too eaſily be overcome by argument. Let even thy very thoughts therefore be chaſt and holy; for if Satan can once gain thy delight, although but in thought of ſin; he will ſoon win thy conſent to action.

Shun Idleneſs as the mother of all licentiouſneſs: God hath promiſed to keep thee in all thy ways; if thou walkeſt out of them into Satans (unto which idleneſs is the ready way) thou art alſo out of his protection: Honeſt recreations are ſo far warrantable unto man as they make him fitter for God: but Chriſtian liberty may be eaſily miſtaken and become licentious impiety: If thou walkeſt too far in it, it will lead thee to neglect of grace and contempt of goodneſs. Take heed therefore of walking wide of Gods path; for when thou art once out, thou neither knoweſt, how far thou art going, nor when thou ſhalt return: give not therefore unto Satan the leaſt opportunity of advantage, but keep thy guards cloſe and ſure againſt him, either by thy diligence in thy lawful imployments (in which God hath gratiouſly allowed thee to ſerve him while thou ſerveſt thy ſelf) or by the holy exerciſes of thy ſpiritual indowments: when he finds thee thus armed thou ſhalt eaſily reſiſt his moſt powerful temptations; if he finds thee naked, the very weakeſt will indanger thee, and the more potent overcome thee.

THE

THE PRAYER.

O Thou bleſſed guardian of my ſinful ſoul and wretched body, in whom alone I live and move and have my bleſſed being; who haſt gratiouſly led me from the light of nature to the happy light of grace; whereby I may be ſafely guided to the bleſſed light of glory: ſave and defend me I moſt meekly beſeech thee, from the powerful aſſaults and daily dangers of my deadly enemy: O leave me not unto the rage and malice of his foul temptations, but ſo ſanctifie my ſoul by thine aſſiſting ſpirit, that I may now and ever gratiouſly reſiſt them, and joyfully and victoriouſly triumph in my reſiſtance of them: Wean me O Lord every day more and more from the cloſe corruptions of my ſinful and depraved nature: O thou that art the ſearcher of the ſecrets of all hearts, ſearch me thoroughly, and try me, that deceitful evil may not be found in me: Diſcover me unto my ſelf O Lord; and then gratiouſly deliver me from my ſelf; even from that old and evil man, that ſinful Law of my members that both daily and hourly rebelleth againſt the Law of my mind, that ſo I may be truly, and wholly, and heartily regenerated unto thee and thy Chriſt: Recal my heart and take off mine affections from the world and worldly vanities; Let me now find no ſweetneſs but in goodneſs, no pleaſure and delight but in thy grace, no reſt and quietneſs but in the full and ſafe aſſurance of thy glory: Grant this dear father, for Jeſus ſake the righteous who hath bought it for me, Amen.

CHAP. X.

Of the bleſſed ſtate of the righteous, in the ſafety of their foundation by Faith, upon the bleſſed corner ſtone Chriſt Jeſus.

NOw after the manifeſtation of the ſtupendious love of God unto man in Chriſt Jeſus, the ſafe removal of thoſe great dangers, ſuppoſed difficulties, and alluring inticements, which hinder many a ſoul from coming in unto him; and having alſo led thee by the hand of mercy to the paths of Repentance: It now remaineth that I yet farther ſhew thee the true nature, uſe and excellency of a ſaving Faith; the trial whereof (as S. *Peter* telleth thee, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6.) *is much more pretious than gold that periſheth*, as being that alone which muſt give thee full aſſurance of that abundant mercy which, (as the ſame Apoſtle telleth thee) *hath begotten thee again unto a lively hope by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead, to an inheritance immortal, undefiled, and which paſſeth not away, reſerved for us in the heavens*; that ſo hereby thou mayſt be timely forewarned of the great danger of unbelief; and thus happily ſeeing the beauty and bleſſedneſs of the one, and the ruine and miſery of the other, thy heart may be firmly fixed (with holy *David*) in the ways of holineſs; that with him alſo thou mayſt ſing and rejoyce; for as the Apoſtle

ſtle tells thee, 1 Pet. 2. 7. *Unto you that believe he is pretious, but unto them who are diſobedient* (by unbelief) *the ſtone which the builders refuſed, the ſame is become the head of the corner*: and, *a ſtone to ſtumble at and a rock of offence.*

When the Son of man cometh ſhall he find faith upon the earth? were the words of our bleſſed Saviour himſelf; and when his bleſſed word cometh, that two edged ſword of the ſpirit that divideth between the joynts and the marrow, the carnal and the ſpiritual builder, ſhall it find faith amongſt carnal and earthly minded men, may be well the words of me his weak and moſt unworthy inſtrument? yet ſeeing he himſelf hath choſen the low and meaneſt things of this world to confound the wiſe and mighty, that he thereby might reap the greater glory; my hope and comfort is, that by his gratious aſſiſtance who hath begun this good work in me, it may be found uſeful unto thoſe that ſtand in need of ſpiritual aſſiſtance: If therefore thou findeſt (by his bleſſing upon it) increaſe of ſpiritual comfort by it, return the praiſe to him by whoſe gratious aſſiſtance and Divine providence, it was both written for thee, and is now directed to thee: *for of him and through him and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever,* Amen.

As this is a point of the moſt high and weighty conſequence upon earth; as that alone by which we muſt expect ſalvation in that great and terrible day of the Lord Jeſus: ſo is it alſo moſt certainly a matter of the near-

eſt concernment to our ſouls here upon earth, as that alone by which, with happy holineſs and godly perſeverance, we make our callings and elections ſure. Let us therefore in the name and fear of God, in the firſt place (as worthy of the higheſt honour) make a ſtrict and diligent inquiry into the true nature of it, that ſo we may have a comfortable aſſurance, that we are part of this myſterious building, and thereby that our names are written in the book of life.

This holy faith, that makes us truly happy, in the firſt place then is not an Ethnick faith (for that relateth only unto truth in moral actions,) but a Theological, that heavenly vertue proper only unto true Religion; by which only true believers are diſtinguiſhed from infidels, for ſo the holy Ghoſt is pleas'd to call them, *John* 20. *Μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός*, *Be not faithleſs* (or infidels) *but believing*.

Neither is there of this theological grace of Faith one and the ſame acception; for there is an hiſtorical faith, a faith of miracles, and a faith of promiſes: the firſt and ſecond of theſe degrees are promiſcuous, as proper to the Devils and reprobates, as unto Gods elect; for *Simon Magus* (*Acts* the 8.) was ſaid to believe, and yet his heart not to be right with God: but the third degree is that which is only proper unto Gods children, whereby they, and they only, do believe truly, and ſavingly; they not only believe God to be, and to be not only true but truth it ſelf in all his promiſes, but they alſo believe into God, that is they do *in Deum ire*

&

& tuendo amare, & amando perſeverare: They go wholly out of themſelves into God as into their ſtrong rock and fortreſs, unto which they may always ſafely reſort, whom they truly and intirely love, as their God, to nouriſh and cheriſh, to relieve and comfort, to ſave and defend them, in this life; and eternally to refreſh them in the life to come; and in this true love, they gratiouſly, and joyfully perſevere unto the end of their days upon earth.

From hence it is, that it is truly ſaid, *Fides non eſt fides ſine fiducia: Faith is not faith without truſt and confidence*: from whence it will follow, that Faith is not a bare act of knowledge in the underſtanding, but faith is, *notitia fiducialis, a truſting knowledge*: but truſting is the proper act of the will, ſo that true ſaving Faith is an act of both the faculties, the underſtanding & the will; as the renewed will is now become a habit of the regenerate Soul, and Faith is in both theſe faculties after the ſame manner that Free-will is in them both, *ab intellectu habens arbitrium, à voluntate libertatem: having choice from the underſtanding, and freedom from the will*: even ſo Faith hath from the underſtanding, aſſent, from the will, truſt and confidence. And this is that in effect which S. *Paul* telleth us, 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. That *Faith caſteth down imaginations and every high thing that is exalted againſt Chriſt*: Now there can be no obedience, but of neceſſity it muſt be by the Act of the will, by which act the underſtanding is ready to aſſent, without heſitation, to the promiſes of God, from whence

the will is again ready to resolve cheerfully and joyfully, and with holy confidence to confide, firmly, and wholly, and only, and constantly in the rich mercy and the saving promises of God in Christ Jesus.

From hence it was that *Abraham*'s faith was commended, as not proceeding from things visible to the understanding, but from the constancy and holiness of the will: and this is that which S. *Paul* intimates when he saith, *Rom.* 4. 18. that *Abraham* believed above hope under hope, not considering the dead bodies of himself and his wife *Sarah*; that is, not admitting into this dispute, the arguments of his humane reason.

Now whereas it is said by the Apostle, *Heb.* 11. 1. *That faith is the evidence of things not seen*, and that therefore (Demonstration being more properly belonging to the understanding than the will) it may seem that Faith is not so much of the will as of the understanding: For the clearing hereof, take this as an undoubted truth: that as in humanity, argument makes Faith, so in Divinity Faith makes argument: This demonstration therefore is primarily in the Will: secondarily, in the understanding: Faith here makes the argument by confidence, and this holy confidence in the will, is of Divine power to command reason in the understanding. Faith maketh of the Thesis an Hypothesis or supposition, and not only so but an Hypostasis, a real and substantial truth, graciously revealed by Gods sacred word which cannot lie; blessedly confirmed by his holy promises, which are all yea, and amen, and

power-

powerfully atteſted by his holy Spirit unto our ſpirits, that we are his children: This, this is that bleſſed faith, by which they all believe, that raiſe this Spiritual building; this is that Vital, Radical, that mother grace *without which* (as the Apoſtle tells us) *it is impoſſible to pleaſe God; for whatſoever is not of faith is ſin*, Rom. 14. 23. and by which the gifts and graces of Gods holy Spirit are kept living in us. Where faith is true, there hope will be lively, and love fervent. By this bleſſed grace alone it is, that thy love unto Gods law will be wonderful, thy comfort in his promiſes raviſhing thy zeal to his glory burning, thy joy in the holy Spirit unſpeakable, thy longing for it inſatiable, thy grief for grieving of it immoderate, and for its departure from thee intollerable; And (which is the ſumm of all) by this alone it is that thou enjoyeſt that Divine peace, that bleſſed peace of God, which paſſeth all our underſtandings; the moſt tranſcendent ſweetneſs whereof, it is impoſſible both for me to utter and for thee to conceive.

Now if it ſhall be here objected that it is both incongruous and impoſſible that faith ſhould be both the foundation, and the inchoation or beginning of this our ſpiritual building; the anſwer is both plain and abſolutely true, that faith is not the foundation of it ſelf, but in reſpect of its bleſſed object, Chriſt Jeſus; for faith hath not any power or efficacy at all (as it is our act) to raiſe us up unto this ſpiritual building, but buildeth its whole ſtrength upon Chriſt the bleſſed foundation thereof; For faith is not the formal but the

instrumental cause of Justification, happily begun in us by application of Christs merits unto us: upon which sure foundation this spiritual building of all those which are in Christ Jesus is so surely fixed, that neither the winds of persecutions, the storms of afflictions, nor the waves of temptations, shall be ever able to overturn it.

There is yet remaining one objection more to be removed, and that of no small concernment, especially unto those, who trust too much to their own righteousness: The objection is briefly this, that it cannot be found in the whole Scripture, that this particle *Onely* is mentioned, where justifying faith is spoken of: from whence would fain be brought in, their beggarly merit of works with other *Roman* rubbidge thereupon depending.

In answer whereunto we will not here inquire into the particle *Onely*, but into the sence and meaning of the holy Ghost, seeing that the holy Scripture plainly and clearly removeth all things from justification, but faith alone: So S. *Paul*, *Rom.* 3. 28. & *Gal.* 2. 21. *Not of works*: *Without works*: *Without the Law*: *but of Faith, that so it may be by Grace* onely. True faith hath hope and love of its own nature so strictly connected to it, that if it should be separated from these, it must of necessity also be separated from it self, and either cease to be such a faith, or not any faith at all: And thus we are justified and stand in the sight of God, a spiritual building by faith onely; but not so alone by Faith as to be naked of good works; *per fidem solam sed non solitariam* say.

say the Schoolmen, *not by a bare and naked faith, but by a faith cloathed with works.* And so it may be truly said that we are justified by works, *associativè*, as they necessarily accompany Faith; but we cannot truly say, that we are justified by Faith with works, *Copulativè*, that is, as they are so coupled to Faith as to merit or deserve the reward of eternal life; seeing that when we have done all that we can, we may all truly say as Christ commands us, *Luke* 17. 10. that we are unprofitable servants.

Saint *James* saith indeed, *Jam.* 2. 22. that *Faith is made perfect by works;* but how? not that faith hath its perfection by works, but that by works it is known to be true faith: for although all the beauty be in the branches, not in the root, yet all the vertue is in the root from whence the branches have their beauty: Although there be no comeliness in Faith, but all is in Charity (from whence good works proceed) yet all this comeliness of Charity, is from that first root of Faith: And S. *Paul* saith, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. *We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ to receive what we have done in the body, whether it be good or whether it be evil*; and our blessed Saviour himself saith, *Revel.* 22. 12. *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to reward every man according to his works*: By these and the like texts of Scripture we must ever understand, that as our evil works shall be punished at Christs coming to Judgement for our sins sake, so shall our good works, (although but weak and imperfect) be graciously accepted of in the merits and per-

perfections of our Saviour, and in him alone (not for the work ſake, but for his promiſe ſake) bleſſedly rewarded. Good works therefore, although they muſt accompany faith, by which faith may be known to be living; yet they can neither put away our ſins, nor avail us any thing by way of ſatisfaction for them towards God, much leſs merit life eternal for us: But it is by faith alone, (thus qualified as thou haſt ſeen,) that we have peace with God; and thereby his bleſſed peace in our own ſouls.

PIOUS ADMONITIONS

Upon the preceding Meditations.

SEeing now that Faith is in it ſelf ſo excellent, and unto us of this ſpiritual building ſo abſolutely neceſſary, let me earneſtly perſwade with thee, (as thou loveſt thy quietneſs and peace of conſcience in this life, and eternal joy and happineſs in that to come) to love this amiable grace, and to beg heartily of God for it; and when by his rich mercy thou injoyeſt it, to rejoyce in it, to imbrace it, to nouriſh and cheriſh it to thy lives end. Saint *James* ſaith, *Jam.* 1. 17. that *every good and perfect gift cometh from above*; and S. *Paul* ſaith, *Phil.* 1. 29. that *Faith is the gift of God*: Prayer therefore is the onely and the bleſſed means to attain it: this is that holy violence that takes heaven by force, that wreſtles (as

Jacob

Jacob did) with God for mercy, and will not let him go without a blessing: Let this therefore move thee to be much with God in prayer for obtaining of it, to be humble, earnest, fervent, even importunate with God, to grant thee this his heavenly grace: Christ bids thee pray *without fainting*; S. *Paul, without ceasing*: let it therefore be thy constant care to improve this holy duty to its best advantage, for obtaining and increasing of this heavenly grace, by which alone thou hast a blessed interest in Christ, in whom are all the treasures. The Apostle tells thee, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6. *To you that believe he is an honour*; not to you that *have* believed or *shall* believe, but unto you that believe at this time present, and at all times present, unto every one in his own time present, and therefore unto thee in thine: even in this thy present opportunity of grace: while thou hast yet this small *Punctum* of time to ask it, and of hope to receive it: he that liveth one day without faith is dead in sin, and suffers Christ for that time to be buried with him.

Observe narrowly the motions of thy soul, either unto good or evil; by these thou wilt soon find whether Christ be formed in thee, and in what relation thou now standest unto Christ, by thy degree of faith; and where thou findest a decay, there labour to make good the repair: Pray often and earnestly for Divine assistance: Practise the precepts, apply the promises, and never give thy soul rest till by thy strength of faith thou hast obtained that lively hope that can evidence unto thee that thou art Gods child, and that although thy faith be weak,

weak yet it is living, and will (by thy Divine improvement of it and Gods bleſſing upon it) gather more ſtrength: Let not this therefore diſcourage thee, ſeeing it is not the degree but the Eſſence of faith, that layeth the bleſſed foundation of the ſpiritual building. Comfort thy ſelf therefore in this, that the faithful do always truly believe, although not always in the ſame degree: ſo that although thy faith be yet weak and wavering, yet becauſe it is true, thou mayſt thereby aſſure thy ſoul that even in this fainting weak appearance of thy faith, thou art ſurely founded on this bleſſed Corner ſtone Chriſt Jeſus, and thereby part of that his ſpiritual building, which ſtandeth to eternity: Be therefore diligent and conſtant in the bleſſed improvement hereof, and the Lord in much mercy give thee all joy and ſpiritual comfort in believing.

THE PRAYER.

O Thou bleſſed and eternal foundation, on which my joyful ſtructure of eternal happineſs is ſurely built, the fountain of my joy and bleſſed end of all my undertakings, from whoſe alone mercy and goodneſs it is, that I have yet time to call upon thee, by which I may obtain this heavenly grace of faith to believe in thee: Vouchſafe I humbly pray thee, ſo to aſſiſt me with thy ſaving grace, that I may daily make a gratious and a ſweet improvement of it: O let me never ſatisfie my ſoul with the bare act of faith

faith without thee my blessed Saviour who art the ever blessed object, in whom alone are all the true and endless treasures: Suffer me not O Lord, for any winnowings of Satan, any hours of temptations, any sorrows and afflictions of life, or any terrours or amazements of death, to fall off from thee my safe and onely refuge: O thou that prayedst for thy servant Peter, *that his Faith might not fail, who now also intercedest thy father for increase of faith in thine Elect, have mercy on me, and pray unto thy father for me, that my faith fail not: Lord, my soul is now both hungry and thirsty for thee, and my longing desire is by true and lively faith to be fixed surely on thee; it is by thy grace alone (O Lord) that I desire to believe: Lord help my unbelief, O break not me thy bruised reed, that am now weak and failing by the many wounds and blemishes that Satan and mine own corruptions have daily brought upon me: Foment these blessed sparks of faith, which thy holy Spirit hath begun in me: O Let these blessed breathings blow them up into a bright and living flame of fervent love to thee and thy glory; grant this dear Lord for thy pretious love sake to thine elect,* Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the blessed State of the Righteous, in the Honour, Beauty, Strength and Safety of their spiritual Building raised upon the blessed Cornerstone Christ Jesus.

HAving already shewed thee the inchoation of thy spiritual Building by Faith, I am now come (to thy spiritual joy and comfort) to the happy raising of thy spiritual Structure; where I shall next faithfully endeavour (as God shall inable me) to shew thee some small glympses of the high honour, incomparable beauty, wonderful strength, and inviolable safety thereof; that thereby thou mayst be much inamoured with it, and make it thy souls sweetest joy and contentment, to know thy self a blessed member of it: And O that I, who now endeavour to declare these high and happy mysteries unto thee, might be inspired from above with an Angelical illumination; that I might thereby shew thee even but the very least of that which here is to be seen; and that thou who readest this mightest be qualified with a Saint like glorified apprehension, that thou thereby mightest be divinely filled with the surpassing comfort and most ravishing sweetness thereof; which is indeed no more possible to be either uttered or conceived by mortal man, than for darkness

darkneſs to comprehend light, or time Eternity: What God (in his ſacred Word) hath gratiouſly revealed unto us, let us receive with thankfulneſs, believe with joy, and behold with comfort.

In the firſt place then, here thou mayſt with joy and ſafety ſpiritually behold this bleſſed Corner-ſtone Chriſt Jeſus (on whom by Faith thou raiſeſt up thy ſpiritual Building) thy God bleſſed for evermore (whom before thou couldeſt not behold and live) now ſo entirely loving and ſo highly honouring thee, as to be clothed with thy frail and infirm fleſh, and in all things to be made like unto thee (ſin only excepted) that thou mayſt thereby caſt off thy filthy garment of Corruption and Mortality, and be richly clothed upon with Incorruption and Glory; that ſo hereafter thou mayſt both ſafely and joyfully ſee him face to face, of which thou haſt a ſweet and ſafe aſſurance by the bleſſed earneſt of his holy Spirit in thee, which witneſſeth unto thee, that thou art his beloved Child, and one of thoſe bleſſed ones that is belonging to his ſpiritual Building.

This is that Stone of value, that pretious ſtone of moſt ineſtimable price, (infinitely tranſcending all the pretious ſtones of higheſt value and of richeſt ornament) that lieth hid in this our ſpiritual Building, even in the broken & the contrite hearts of us his ſpiritual people, whereby we are internally moſt highly honoured: the King's daughter (the truly regenerate ſoul) is all glorious within; which inward glory S. *Peter* tells us, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. *is the hidden man of the heart.* Now conſider to thine endleſs

endleſs comfort, how great an honour thou receiveſt by this inward entertainment of thy Saviour. Every heart of man that hath not Chriſt Jeſus hid in it is a ſtony heart, and thereby utterly incapable of the leaſt impreſſion of mercy; whereby it becomes the veſſel of wrath, and ſo wofully ſubjected to eternal ruine. Now (to thy ſouls refreſhment) by this inward honour which Chriſt confers upon thee, in taking from thee thy ſtony heart, and giving thee an heart of fleſh; (an humble, contrite and obedient heart) thou art yet farther honoured in this thy ſpiritual building, by theſe following Ornaments beſtowed on his Elect. He finds us walls of Clay, frail and momentany, and leaves us walls of Marble, ſtrong and durable, even laſting to Eternity; He finds us bare and naked walls, pilled and broken by the flaws and breaches ſin hath made in us, and leaves us clothed walls, hang'd with the rich robes of his own Righteouſneſs; He finds us dead, and leavs us living walls; He finds us weak and tottering walls, not only falling, but already fallen, even unto Hell it ſelf, and leaves us ſtanding and upright walls, aſpiring to the higheſt Heavens: and ſuch high honour have all his Saints in relation to themſelves, as they are true Believers, and ſo belonging to this ſpiritual Building.

Secondly, Chriſt is an honour to thee in reſpect of others that are true Believers, all of them exhibiting mutual honour each unto other; inſomuch as they are all living ſtones digged out of the ſame ſpiritual Rock Chriſt Jeſus,

ſus, ſent into one and the ſame Foundation, for the joint raiſing up of one and the ſame ſpiritual Building: In each of which lieth a magnetick vertue of drawing and inviting a mutual honour to the whole, which is an honour likewiſe unto every true Believer, in reſpect of his bleſſed fellowſhip and Communion with the Saints, thoſe exellent ones of the earth, the ſweeteſt and the choiceſt of all company amongſt the ſons of men.

Thirdly, Chriſt is an honour to thee in reſpect of Unbelievers themſelves, impoſing heavy burthens on the ſhoulders of the Faithful, by wrongs and injuries, by cruelty and oppreſſion, by perſecution, and other moſt unjuſt vexation; how great is their honour then, in Chriſt's owning of them to belong to him, in his protecting, comforting and acknowledging of them to be his honourable members, his choſen jewels, who is the King of glory?

O ineffable, invaluable, highly tranſcendent honour of Believers, who ſow in tears and reap in joy! who have thoſe bitter tears which they have ſhed in this life, ſafely treaſured up in God's own Bottle, that ſo he may return unto them a far more abundant and exceeding weight of glory in the life to come, maugre all the malice of their bitter enemies, who are marked with this bleſſed white & Corner-ſtone Chriſt Jeſus. How excellently great, how truly ſweet is this their threefold honour upon earth? and yet all this, and whatſoever elſe of honour they enjoy in this their valley of Tears, is but a dark ſhadow of their far higher

higher honour of eternal glory, which Chriſt their bleſſed Corner-ſtone hath purchaſed, and is gone before to prepare for them. How great it ſhall be, and what it ſhall be, it hath not entred, it cannot enter into the heart of ſinful man to conceive, much leſs into the tongue of Mortal man to utter; what and how great this glory then ſhall be is only known to him who is the God of Glory: *Father* (ſaith Chriſt, *John* 17. 24.) *I will that thoſe whom thou haſt given me may be with me where I am, that they may behold that my glory which thou haſt given me before the foundation of the World; and the glory which thou haſt given me I have given to them, that they may be one, as we are one.* More I am not able to ſhew unto thee; nor to manifeſt even but the very leaſt glympſe of this exceeding weight of Glory, which thoſe who are the bleſſed building on this Corner-ſtone Chriſt Jeſus ſhall one day poſſeſs; ſeeing it cannot poſſibly now enter into us, let it joyfully ſuffice us that we ſhall ſurely enter into it.

To ſee God, and to ſee him in Chriſt Jeſus to be our God, is the ſumm of all that is or ever can be to make our happineſs complete. And here is Chriſt's Prayer for it which cannot be denied; here is Chriſts Promiſe for it, which can never be broken. Here is glory, here is Chriſt's glory, here is Chriſt's eternal glory; even that glory which he had with the Father before the foundation of the world; and which is the ſumm of all, here is a gratious communication of this exceeding weight of Chriſt's eternal glory unto this his ſpiritual Building,

Building, even to the ſouls and bodies of his Saints, with which they are both fully and for ever ſweetly ſatisfied.

Higher than this I cannot go, no nor the bleſſed Angels themſelves: Let it therefore ſavingly content us, that we who are in Chriſt ſhall ſhortly enjoy it; where everlaſting joy ſhall be upon our heads, and we ſhall poſſeſs joy and exaltation; where all tears ſhall be wiped away from our eyes, and all ſorrows from our hearts; where ſin ſhall be ſwallowed up of righteouſneſs, corruption of immortality, and time of eternity.

And now beloved Chriſtian, the earneſt deſire of my ſoul is that what thou haſt now read (touching the great honour of all true Believers) may perſwade with thee faithfully to believe it to be ſpoken of thy ſelf, as one of thoſe bleſſed members of this ſpiritual Building that ſhall eternally enjoy it. Believe I beſeech thee, that the life of true Believers, is a truly honourable life; that thou mayſt thereby underſtand that never any mortal man (how great ſoever) hath diminiſhed one tittle of his honour, but much augmented it, by his believing in Chriſt. Believe that honour out of Chriſt is a meer ſhadow, full of emptineſs and vanity, that thou mayſt thereby underſtand, that no mortal man can be truly honourable but by his believing in Chriſt. Believe that only the faithful are thoſe excellent ones of the earth; that thou mayſt thereby underſtand of what high value thou art thy ſelf, and of what high eſteem he faithful (how poor ſoever and deſpicable they be) ought

ought to be unto thee. Believe that thy Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is truly honourable, of eternal Extract, of eternal Duration, that thou mayst thence understand how worthily thou oughtest to live; that so thou likewise mayst be an honour unto him who hath thus highly honoured thee. In the last place, believe and rejoyce, that Christ is that spiritual Rock out of which thou art cut to make one of this spiritual building, that so thou mayst understand that in him alone thou livest, movest and injoyest this thy spiritual being; and that therefore unto him alone thou oughtest to ascribe all possible praise and honour, with hearty thanksgiving, and humble adoration both now and for ever.

Look now upon the surpassing beauty of this spiritual building, and thou mayst here behold (to thy souls unspeakable comfort) that God himself is the builder and the maker of it, in whose work there can be nothing wanting, either of wisdom to frame, of power to raise, of strength to support, or of beauty to adorn; each part thereof (by his Divine Symmetry) being so proportionably fitted and so strongly cemented unto other (in that blessed union of Love, which is the bond of peace) that each is a support and strengthening unto other, and all unto the whole: Christ Jesus the corner stone unto the building, the building unto it self, each part of it unto the whole, and all unto every part, (the blessed communion of Saints unto each blessed believer) is a beauty so incomparable that even God himself is much delighted to behold it: that

that even Chriſt himſelf is fain to double his Encomium of it: *Cant.* 1. 14. *Behold thou art fair my love, Behold thou art fair, thou art altogether lovely*: this is that lovely beauty of this holy ſtructure which the Prophet *David* gives thee an account of, when he ſaith, *Jeruſalem is a city which is at unity within it ſelf*; and this is that alſo which S. *John* tells thee, *Revel.* 21. 2, 3. *And I John ſaw the holy City, the new Jeruſalem, come down from God, prepared as a bride trimmed for her husband.*

Neither is this glorious beauty only in the whole, but alſo in the very meaneſt part hereof, how vile or deſpicable ſoever it may appear unto the worlds eye: even the very pooreſt true believer is an object ſo lovely, ſo amiable, ſo beautiful in Gods eye, that he can never look off from it; he can never caſt his eye from the Righteous in Chriſt, in whatſoever ſtate or condition he finds him: *His eye is upon the righteous*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *Pſalm* 34. 15. *and his ear is open to their prayer*, ſaith S. *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 12. And this ſo much delighted eye of God, is *Oculus firmatus* (as the *Latine* Bible reads it) an eye which is ſo faſtened and fixed upon him, that it never removeth: Yea, ſo exceeding earneſtly is this his eye of affection fixed upon all, and every part of this his holy building, that he gratiouſly proclaims its beauty, not only with a double *Ecce*, Behold, but alſo with an amorous ingemination, with an earneſt iteration of ſpeech, *Cant.* 4. 1. *Behold, thou art fair my love, behold thou art fair, thou art all fair and there is no ſpot in thee.*

For

For God (who is beauty it self) to look upon the beauty of this his spiritual building with such an amorous eye of affection as to behold it without spot or blemish, is a favour so high, so great, so glorious, as that it far transcends the tongues of men and Angels to express it; and yet such is the beauty of this spiritual building, as that there is yet a far higher honour done unto all his Saints; for God (who is infinitely great and glorious) is not only much delighted to behold it, but is graciously well-pleased to come down and dwell in it. *Behold*, saith S. *John*, *Revel* 21. 3. *the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be their God with them, and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.* Of which likewise we have yet a farther and most comfortable assurance even from the mouth of God himself, *Isaiah* 57. 17. *I am the high and holy God dwelling in the highest heavens, with him also that is of an humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble*; (of him that is truly sorrowful for his sins, who buildeth not upon his own righteousness, but upon the righteousness of Christ.)

O the wonderful condescention of an ever blessed God! how high is this favour? how great is this honour? how unvaluable, how unutterable this love? unto his beautiful and dearly beloved Spouse the Church; and unto each peculiar member of it: Who can sufficiently admire it? what mortal man is able fully to apprehend it? Let us all therefore humbly adore it, and joyfully and thankfully express

our

our ſelves with holy *David*, *Pſal.* 8. 4. *Lord what is man that thou remembreſt him, or the Son of man thou thus viſit'ſt him? Thou haſt made him but little lower than the Angels, and crowned him with glory and honour*; with honour by theſe thy gratious viſits in this life, with glory by thine eternal imbraces in the life to come.

Thou haſt already ſeen ſome ſmall appearances of the tranſcendent honour, and incomparable beauty of this ſpiritual building; I ſhall now indeavour (as God ſhall inable me) to ſhew thee the wonderful ſtrength of it: And here in the firſt place, thou mayſt behold (to thy ſouls exceeding comfort) that this is that bleſſed building whoſe eternal foundation is ſo ſurely laid, that neither the allurements of the world, the corruptions of the fleſh, nor the temptations of the Devil, ſhall ever be able to prevail againſt it, for God loved us from the beginning; and S. *John* tells us, 1 *John* 4. 10. that *whom he loveth, he loveth to the end*: the bleſſed foundation is ſure, the building ſtrong, the duration eternal.

He that buildeth on the ſandy foundation of his own righteouſneſs, may well fear the ſafety of his building, and the ſuddenneſs of its fall: for when the tempeſtuous winds of Gods incenſed wrath againſt ſinners, ſhall blow upon it, it muſt then needs be overthrown and fall, and the fall thereof (as Chriſt himſelf tells us) ſhall be great. But now our comfort and aſſurance is that this bleſſed corner ſtone on which we build, is that rock of Ages which can never fail, *againſt which the gates of hell it ſelf* (as Chriſt tells us, *Matth.* 16. 18.)

ſhall never be able to prevail: If our building were on works, our election then were uncertain, but now it is on faith, we may aſſure our ſouls, it is both ſure and eternal; that Gods gratious eye of mercy is upon us, to pardon our weakneſs and accept our willingneſs, that his holy Spirit is in us, to guide and direct us to the happy means conducing to the bleſſed end, faith, holineſs and perſeverance; faith to lay hold upon his gratious promiſes; holineſs to conform us to his bleſſed likeneſs; and perſeverance in both, to aſſure our ſouls of his gratious performance (the bleſſed end of our creation) the ſaving of our pretious ſouls.

This holy building may indeed be ſorely ſhaken, but ſeeing it can never poſſibly be overturned, it is the ſureſt argument of its greater ſtrength: the temptations of the world may for a time ſo powerfully aſſault it, that it may ſeem to ſhake; the corruptions of nature may ſo far undermine it, that it may appear to be in danger; the winnowings of Satan may ſo far prevail againſt it, that there may be great need of Chriſts prayers to ſupport it, and which is yet a far greater (and indeed the very greateſt of all dangers to it) even Chriſt himſelf this bleſſed corner ſtone may (by reaſon of the former ſhakings occaſioned by ſin) ſeem for ſome time to deſert it, and take no farther care of it.

This hath been the ſad condition even of the very deareſt of Gods children, who as they have had their ſinful aberrations from grace, ſo they have likewiſe had their ſad deſertions of Gods holy ſpirit, and their woful doubtings

of

of his gratious return, by which their pretious faith hath to them seemed to be much weakened, if not greatly indangered; so that as they have had (by Gods blessed spirit being present with them) their exaltations of joy, so likewise by these his desertions, their fluctuations of sorrow, as sad memorials of their humane frailties: And here we may behold *Noah* and *Lot*, grievously sinning, and for Gods absence no doubt but sadly sorrowing; *Jonah* seemingly cast out of Gods favour, and even ready to despair; *David* a long time securely resting in sin, and thereby (for the loss of Gods presence) grievously afflicted with sorrow, sadly bewailing his absence, and even almost despairing of his gratious return; crying out in the bitterness and anguish of his soul, *Psal.* 77. 7, 8, 9. verses, *Will the Lord absent himself for ever, and will he shew no more favour? is his mercy clean gone for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gratious, and hath he shut up his tender mercy in displeasure?* Here indeed we may behold this structure violently shaken, and (unto mans eye) in apparant and great danger to be overturned: but now see (to thy souls satisfaction) the most gratious support; for it follows in a breath: *And I said this is my death, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most high*; although by the frailty of mine own corrupt nature, I am even ready to sink into the depth of despair (the death of my soul) yet by Gods supporting grace I can remember with comfort that I am his child, that he hath therefore suffered me to fall, that by true and timely repentance and his grace assist-

ing, I may be raiſed up to more ſpiritual ſtrength, that ſo where ſin hath abounded, there grace may abound much more, to his glory and mine own eternal comfort; from whence I will with joy conclude, that my foundation is ſure, my building ſtrong, and my election in Chriſt irrevocable. Thus ſweetly ready is the Lord to ſupport all thoſe that build upon him, and to give them ſpiritual comfort in their greateſt need.

Comfort thy ſelf therefore in this whoſoever thou art that groaneſt under the weighty preſſure of thy ſins; that although thou art a while forſaken for thy ſins ſake, yet that thou art undoubtedly beloved for thy Saviours ſake; thoſe eyes of mercy which ever looked gratiouſly upon repenting ſinners upon earth, cannot now be diſdainful in heaven: We have Chriſts bleſſed promiſe for it, *John* 15.26. *If I go from you, I will ſend you the comforter*; we may all therefore ſafely aſſure our ſelves, that are of this building, that he will never leave us, that he will never forſake us, that he will never leave us totally, that he will never forſake us finally, that he will never ſo leave us, as not to leave ſome ſeeds of ſaving grace remaining in us, whereby we may aſſure our ſelves, that he hath not wholly withdrawn his grace from us, but only the preſent comfort of his grace from working in us. We may for a time be forſaken for ſin: We may be forſaken in the puniſhment for ſin: We may be forſaken in the ſeverity of this puniſhment: We may be forſaken in the fearful apprehenſion of Gods caſting of us off in this ſeverity:

We

We may be ſo forſaken that even the very foundation of this our ſpiritual building may ſeem to us to be moved, and the whole ſtructure of our ſpiritual conſolations even ready to fall: and yet for all this we may with joy aſſure our ſouls, that we ſhall never be ſo caſt off as to be quite forſaken: for which (as the comfortable cloſe of our aſſured ſtrength in this our ſpiritual ſtructure) we have Gods own promiſe by the mouth of his holy Prophet to confirm it, *Iſaiah* 54. *For a moment have I forſaken thee, but with everlaſting kindneſs will I gather thee*: therefore, as unto the ſtrength of this our ſpiritual building, let us comfort one another with theſe words.

I am now come in the laſt place to ſhew thee the exceeding ſweetneſs of the ſafety of thy ſpiritual Building, that thou mayſt thereby ſee the truly bleſſed condition (both in ſoul and body) of all thoſe happy ones that are truly builded on this bleſſed foundation. And here (with joy) thou mayſt behold that more eſpecial and peculiar eye of God's holy Providence upon all his faithful and elect Children, moſt ſweetly ordering and diſpoſing all the occurrences of this life unto their very great advantages. Temptations, afflictions, croſſes, calamities, perſecutions, even their very ſins, even the very malice of the Devil, all working together to the beſt for them, in and through him who hath thus dearly loved them, and is now and ever interceding for them; in whom alone (as in their ſureſt fortreſs) they joyfully and ſafely reſt themſelves, and unto which in all their dangers (both of

ſoul and body (with holy *David*) they always cheerfully reſort.

If *Joſeph* be ſorely afflicted by being ſold into *Egypt* by his brethren, it is that he may thereby become a Steward to provide food in the time of famine to ſuſtain his Father and his Brethren: if *David* be in trouble, it is becauſe it was good for him, that he thereby might not forget his God, and ſo have gone aſtray: if *Daniel* be in Captivity, it is to raiſe him unto honour; that ſo thereby the captive Nation of the Jews might be preſerved: if the holy Martyrs endure the puniſhment of fire for Chriſt's ſake, it is to cloath them in long white robes to follow the Lamb in glory: if *Paul* be buffeted by Satan with ſore temptations, it is to let him know, that he ſhould not exalt himſelf above meaſure, and be ſpiritually proud of his abundance of Revelations: if he bear in his body the marks of the Lord Jeſus by ſcourging, by impriſonment, by hungring and thirſting often, it is that he thereby may be more than Conquerour (through him that loveth him) by his Chriſtian patience poſſeſſing his own ſoul, and by his bleſſed example gaining the ſouls of others; and by his full aſſurance that (by theſe his ſufferings) having born the Image of the earthly Jeſus, he ſhall alſo bear the Image of the heavenly. If he finds a Law in his members rebelling againſt the law of his mind, and leading him captive to the Law of ſin, it is to let him know that God hath concluded all things under ſin, that his grace may abound unto all thoſe that crucifie the luſts of the fleſh. Yea ſuch is the

ſafe

ſafe and ſweet condition of the Saints, that in whatſoever condition they are, they have both ſafety of body and ſecurity of ſoul. Yea ſo truly bleſſed is their condition, that even the very greateſt of the ſufferings of this life are given unto them for the greateſt bleſſings, as S. *Paul* witneſſeth, *Phil.* 1. 29. *To you it is given* (as a peculiar mercy) *that ye ſhould not only believe in him, but alſo ſuffer for his names ſake, by which ye are made conformable to the ſufferings of Chriſt*: by theſe ſufferings it is that we are humbled for our ſins, weaned from the World, more nearly united to Chriſt, and (which is the ſum of all) hereby we glorifie our God in this life, that thereby he may give us an increaſe of glory in the life to come.

From this their bleſſed ſafety, ariſeth their contentedneſs and quietneſs of ſpirit, in whatſoever ſtate or condition of life the Lord is pleaſed to put them. If injuries be offered, they meekly receive them and piouſly return their prayers for them, as well knowing that thoſe who offer injuries to others do thereby offer the greateſt injury to their own ſouls. If poverty afflict them, they know it is to make them rich in grace, and thereby great in glory; they are therefore well contented with it, and can ſay with comfort (even in their very greateſt neceſſities) with *David*, *Pſal.* 37. 16. *A little that the righteous hath is better than great revenues of the wicked.*

If the world ſmile upon them they are humble under it, and thankful for it; if it frown (with holy *David*) they can patiently

ſoul and body (with holy *David*) they always cheerfully reſort.

If *Joſeph* be ſorely afflicted by being ſold into *Egypt* by his brethren, it is that he may thereby become a Steward to provide food in the time of famine to ſuſtain his Father and his Brethren: if *David* be in trouble, it is becauſe it was good for him, that he thereby might not forget his God, and ſo have gone aſtray: if *Daniel* be in Captivity, it is to raiſe him unto honour; that ſo thereby the captive Nation of the Jews might be preſerved: if the holy Martyrs endure the puniſhment of fire for Chriſt's ſake, it is to cloath them in long white robes to follow the Lamb in glory: if *Paul* be buffeted by Satan with ſore temptations, it is to let him know, that he ſhould not exalt himſelf above meaſure, and be ſpiritually proud of his abundance of Revelations: if he bear in his body the marks of the Lord Jeſus by ſcourging, by impriſonment, by hungring and thirſting often, it is that he thereby may be more than Conquerour (through him that loveth him) by his Chriſtian patience poſſeſſing his own ſoul, and by his bleſſed example gaining the ſouls of others; and by his full aſſurance that (by theſe his ſufferings) having born the Image of the earthly Jeſus, he ſhall alſo bear the Image of the heavenly. If he finds a Law in his members rebelling againſt the law of his mind, and leading him captive to the Law of ſin, it is to let him know that God hath concluded all things under ſin, that his grace may abound unto all thoſe that crucifie the luſts of the fleſh. Yea ſuch is the

ſafe

ſafe and ſweet condition of the Saints, that in whatſoever condition they are, they have both ſafety of body and ſecurity of ſoul. Yea ſo truly bleſſed is their condition, that even the very greateſt of the ſufferings of this life are given unto them for the greateſt bleſſings, as S. *Paul* witneſſeth, *Phil.* 1. 29. *To you it is given* (as a peculiar mercy) *that ye ſhould not only believe in him, but alſo ſuffer for his names ſake, by which ye are made conformable to the ſufferings of Chriſt*: by theſe ſufferings it is that we are humbled for our ſins, weaned from the World, more nearly united to Chriſt, and (which is the ſum of all) hereby we glorifie our God in this life, that thereby he may give us an increaſe of glory in the life to come.

From this their bleſſed ſafety, ariſeth their contentedneſs and quietneſs of ſpirit, in whatſoever ſtate or condition of life the Lord is pleaſed to put them. If injuries be offered, they meekly receive them and piouſly return their prayers for them, as well knowing that thoſe who offer injuries to others do thereby offer the greateſt injury to their own ſouls. If poverty afflict them, they know it is to make them rich in grace, and thereby great in glory; they are therefore well contented with it, and can ſay with comfort (even in their very greateſt neceſſities) with *David*, *Pſal.* 37. 16. *A little that the righteous hath is better than great revenues of the wicked.*

If the world ſmile upon them they are humble under it, and thankful for it; if it frown (with holy *David*) they can patiently

tarry the Lord's leisure; for they know assuredly that he is their helper, and that no good thing will he with-hold from them that love him, as *David* tells us *Psal.* 34. 10.

If sickness seize upon them, they can say chearfully with old *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do what he will*, and with holy *Job*, 13. 15. *Although the Lord kill me yet will I trust in him*; for with holy *David*, they well know that he maketh their bed in their sickness; their bed of affliction to humble them, and their bed of consolation to support them; *His rod and his staff they comfort them.*

I will lead thee but one step farther, and that shall be from thy safety in temptations and afflictions of life, to thy security in those dark and silent Chambers of Death, that we may there examine what may be found in them, that may deserve the name of fear or danger to the righteous. And here we shall surely find, that as our lives are safe, so even our very deaths are safe and pretious: for which we have the sweet and safe assurance of the Lord himself, *Isaiah* 26. 20. *Come my people*, saith he, *enter thou into thy Chambers, and rest thee there, as it were for a little moment, till the indignation be overpast*: the body into the lower room the grave, the soul into those upper rooms of glory, where it shall remain in perfect joy and felicity, and be again restored to the same body in incorruption and eternal glory.

What matter is it now though the body sleep in silence, so it rest in safety? who can be sad to see it returning to dust, while this dust

dust is prepaing for glory, of which not one atome shall be lost, but all restored with advantage; for corruption it shall put on incorruption, for mortality immortality and glory. O the ever blessed condition of the Saints! how unspeakable is their happiness, how transcendent their honour, how amiable their beauty, how great their strength, how inviolable their safety, how sweet their quiet and content, how ravishing their joy, how unspeakable their comfort, and how unsearchable their glory! so great, so infinitely high and ravishing, even beyond all the shallow thoughts of sinful man, that even but the least appearance of it may be well accounted by S. *Paul, an exceeding weight of glory*, such and so great, that none can possibly bear more Blessed Lord, seeing we cannot now comprehend it, let us hereafter be comprehended of it. *Amen.*

PIOUS ADMONITIONS

Upon the preceding Meditations.

LEt what thou hast now read, in the first place, be matter of Caution, that this blessed Corner-stone Christ Jesus be not carelessly and sinfully refused by thee, and so become unto thee (as S. *Peter* tells thee the carnal Builders of this world make it unto themselves, 1 *Pet.* 2. 8.) *A stone to stumble at, & a rock of offence*, who are much offended at the sincerity of

Christ's Doctrine, who (with *Balaam*) would gladly die the death of the righteous; but with *Paul* cannot afford willingly and chearfully to beat down their bodies (their corrupt natures, their carnal desires) that the inward man may rejoice; who love Christ, but not his Cross. O let not the blessed yoke of Christ (which he himself hath told thee is an easie yoke) seem hard unto thee, nor that burthen heavy, which thou wilt find (as Christ assures thee) to be light. Let not therefore the despised or persecuted state of the Church at any time discourage thee. Let Reason laugh, so Faith may triumph; for Faith shall be victorious, and Reason captiv'd. Remember that Christ was a Man of sorrows, never seen to laugh, but often to weep; and that therefore it is most meet that a true resemblance should be found between the suffering Head and the afflicted members; *For if we suffer with him here, we shall also there be glorified together with him.*

In the next place let this admonish thee to deal truly with thy self, to search narrowly for sin, and (where thou findest thy self failing) to pray earnestly for pardon, to sue heartily for grace, to hate and abhor all ungodliness, (as most dishonourable to so great a Master, to so high a calling, to so noble and divine an extract as thy pretious soul is of;) to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and graciously to persevere therein; whereby thou mayst assure thy soul that thou art firmly builded on this blessed Corner-stone Christ Jesus, that builds thee up to everlasting happiness.

Let

Let this thy truly blessed, honourable, and eternal structure, upon this sure and safe foundation Christ Jesus, in the next place admonish thee to humility of soul, and thankfulness of heart, who hast nothing of thine own to offer unto God as a ransom for thy sins: for that (as *David* tells thee *Psal.* 49. 7) man must let alone for ever; the very best of whose righteousness is but as filthy rags, and the very best of whose service unprofitable. O let this his pretious love unto thee fill thy heart with love to him, and thy mouth with praises of him. As thou art firmly fixed on this blessed Corner-stone, where thou art both truly safe, and eternally blessed; so let thy heart be firmly fixed to walk chearfully and joyfully and constantly in his holy ways, and thy tongue be ever ready to shew forth his praises, and (out of this thy fervent love to his goodness and inflamed zeal to his glory) to invite others thereunto, and say with holy *David*, *O praise the Lord with me, all ye his Saints, and let us magnifie his name together.* When thou canst thus happily order thy conversation aright, thou mayst assure thy soul with joy, that thou art one of this blessed building, that thy foundation is sure, and thy building safe; and that thereby thy joy will be unutterable, thy peace inviolable, thy life sweet, and thy death blessed; which the Lord in mercy grant unto us all.

THE PRAYER.

O *Thou good and gracious Shepherd of my ſin-ſick ſoul, the Rock of my ſafety, the Fountain of my joy, the ſweetneſs of my life, and comfort of my death, the Lord's anointed, and my moſt merciful and ever bleſſed Jeſus; in whom alone I live, and move, and have my ſpiritual being; who (out of thine abundant love and mercy unto man) cameſt into the world to ſeek and to ſave thoſe that are loſt, that findeſt whom thou ſeekeſt, and loſeſt none of thoſe whom thou haſt found; who for my ſake haſt ſhed thy pretious bloud to be a ranſom to the Father for me: ſuffer me not, O Lord, thy loſt ſheep, who have ſo long ſtraied from thee into the ſtrange paſture of impiety, whom thou haſt now at laſt found and brought home in ſafety to thy bleſſed fold; O ſuffer me not, I humbly pray thee, to wander any more out of thy waies, thoſe ſafe and pleaſant paths that lead me to content and happineſs: O hold thou up my goings in theſe bleſſed paths of thine, that my feet ſlip not, that I incline not to my former follies: Lord as I have hitherto been wholly carnal (for thy tender love ſake unto me) make me now wholly ſpiritual, that ſo I may be firmly founded, by a true and living faith, on thee my ſure and bleſſed Corner-ſtone; that thereby I may truly know thee, filially fear thee, entirely love thee, joyfully delight in thee, and for ever give my ſoul and body as a living ſacrifice unto thee: Lord ſtrengthen and ſupport the weakneſs of my wavering faith; O nouriſh and cheriſh it by the bleſſed*

breathings

breathings of thy holy Spirit in me; and for thy rich mercy sake unto me, in all the weaknesses and infirmities of my sinful and corrupt nature, in all the allurements and enticements of this evil world, in all the assaults and temptations of the Devil, in all the troubles and disturbances of life, and in all the terours and affrightment of Death, let thy grace (O Lord) be sufficient for me: grant this sweet Jesus, for thy precious blood sake, which was spilt upon the Cross for me a miserable sinner. Amen.

CHAP. XII.

Of the sad and deplorable State of the Wicked, in the deformity, weakness and ruine of their carnal Building, sinfully raised upon the false and sandy foundation of their own Righteousness, and their vain hopes of mercy, in the sinful injoyments of the World.

THou hast already (to thy soul's exceeding comfort) seen the blessed state of the righteous, in the honour, beauty, strength and safety of their spiritual Building; I am now come to shew thee (as God shall farther direct me) the sad and most deplorable condition of the wicked, in the weakness, falseness and eternal ruine of their carnal; that when thou hast beheld them (with sorrow for them) whom S. *Paul* could not without tears, thou mayst thereby be more deterred from the waies

of

of wickedneſs, and every day be more and more in love with holineſs, and thereby grow up at laſt unto the bleſſed meaſure of the complete ſtature of the perfect man in Chriſt Jeſus.

Theſe are thoſe unhappy Builders that S. *Peter* tells us of, 1 *Pet.* 2. 8. whom he terms the diſobedient ones, unto whom this bleſſed Corner ſtone Chriſt Jeſus, is become a ſtone to ſtumble at and a rock of offence. Whoſe ſinful diſobedience was in their refuſing Chriſt, and whoſe dreadful puniſhment ſhall be in Chriſt's refuſing them. And theſe are now thoſe thrice unhappy Builders, who build upon the ſtraw and ſtubble of their own imperfect holineſs, the merits of their works, whereby the Lord of life is become uſeleſs to them. And theſe are thoſe alſo, *whoſe God is their belly, whoſe glory is their ſhame, who mind earthly things*; unto whom, as S. *Paul* tells us, 1 *Cor.* 4. the bleſſed Saints of God are accounted fooliſh, weak and deſpicable, the very dung and offſcouring of the earth; but to their ſorrow, they ſhall one day find, that theſe are God's choſen Jewels, who ſhall then be comforted, when they ſhall tormented; where they ſhall too late find, that their foundation was falſe, their ſtructure weak, and that the ruine ſhall remain for ever.

And here thou mayſt firſt behold it in the weakneſs, and falſeneſs of its ſandy foundation, the riches of iniquity, the vain glorious honours, and the ſinful pleaſures of this tranſitory life, on which, as on a ſure and firm foundation, the carnal Builder raiſeth up his momen-

momentany structure (his hopes of happiness in this life) and vainly hopes for pardon of his sins in that to come; whereby this pretious Corner-stone is refused, the severity of his doctrine distasted, the taking up of his cross, and following of him in the new birth avoided, and the mean and persecuted state of his Church upon earth utterly despised: neither is it indeed any great wonder, if we well consider of the true cause of this mistake, which S. *John* tells us, *John* 1. 5. is their spiritual blindness, *The light* (saith he) *shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not: The carnal man*, saith the Apostle, *beholdeth not the things of the spirit, neither indeed can*: our blessed Saviour gives us the reason of it in these words, *The God of this world*, (the sinful vanities of life) having *blinded* him, so that he cannot see those blessed things that are belonging to his everlasting peace: from whence it is that he can neither see his present danger, nor prevent his future fall.

For the clearer discovery whereof, let us now (by the blessed light of Gods sacred word) strictly examine either of these builders in the first place, in the supposed strength of their mistaken foundations, and we shall soon find that these are those sandy ones, of which our blessed Saviour speaks, *Matth.* 7. 27. whereon that foolish building was erected, *On which when the winds blew, and the waves beat, it fell, and the fall thereof was great.*

First then as to the civil Justiciary, who buildeth on the false foundation of his own righteousness; how may we come to the knowledge of him? in what corner of the earth

earth shall we find him? if we shall ask as *Moses* bids us *ab extremo cælorum ad extremum*, from one side of heaven to the other, although *Jerusalem were searched with candles*, (as the Prophets Phrase is) *Zeph.* 1. 12. yet the question may be put, whether one righteous man may be found? The Prophet *Michah*, *Mich.* 7. 2. (as it seems upon inquiry made) returns a *non est inventus*, that he was not any where to be found; *The Righteous man*, saith he, *is perished out of the earth, there is none upright, none righteous amongst men*; Nay, God himself whose eye is every where, could not espy so much as one righteous man, *Psal.* 32. *There is none*, saith he, *that doth good, no not one*, *Psal.* 53. 4. Man indeed in his first creation, was made in the image of God, that is, in Righteousness and true holiness; but now such are the miserable and wretched effects of his apostasy, that none can now be said to be righteous before God; to be legally righteous, perfectly righteous, exactly righteous; none righteous in himself, and from himself, none meritoriously righteous; none so righteous, as that he may dare to rely upon his own righteousness for his justification before God; none so righteous, as to make a plea of his own righteousness, before the infinite justice of God.

From hence was that of S. *Augustin*: *Væ etiam laudabilis hominum vita si remota misericordia discutietur*, Wo even to the most upright man if his life shall be examined without mercy. From hence also was that passionate expression of holy *David*, *Psal.* 143. 2. where he both declines and deprecates that severe trial of his own

own righteousnes in these words, *Domine ne intres in judicium; enter not into Judgment, O Lord*: If holy *David*, a man after Gods own heart, was sore afraid of the very entrance into Judgment, what sinful man alive shall be able to endure the severe sentence and execution thereof?

Upon this false foundation is arrogantly raised that their sinful structure of spiritual pride of good works, which indeed are necessary, as the companions of faith, but not as competitors with Christs merits, to make an attonement for sin, and a reconciliation for mercy; seeing that even the very best of them, in Gods all-searching eye, are no better than vile and filthy garments, full of pollution and uncleanness; with which whosoever is found, not having on the wedding garment, the pretious robe of Christs righteousnes to cover him, shall be bound hand and foot, and cast out into utter darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

On this is also raised that fictitious and presumptuous faith of meriting for others; that weak and sinful structure of our eternal election, caused by foreseen faith and good works, whereby Gods eternal Decree (which S. *Paul* tells us stands sure, as the blessed foundation of our eternal building in Christ) is made weak, revocable, and uncertain; from whence also, their faith in Christ must needs be lame and imperfect, as partly grounded on his merits, and partly on their own; their hope in his mercy no longer lively than their trust in their own inherent holiness vigorous,

(which

(which through the sinful failings of corrupt nature, even in the very best of men, is often weak and languishing;) their love unto Christ their Saviour (which ought to be intire) most sinfully divided; and even the blessed sufferings of their blessed Saviour, an insufficient sacrifice for sin, without their merits of condignity to merit with it; by which most sinfully sacrilegious presumption, the free love of God in Christ Jesus is sinfully and wickedly undervalued, his free-grace (which in mans salvation ought only to abound) unthankfully diminished, and his great glory (which God himself saith, he will not give to another) most presumptuously eclipsed. These, and other such like straw and stubble as these are, S. *Paul* beats down to the ground: *Every strong hold and every high imagination*, (of reason, of works, of merits,) *that exalt themselves against Christ, must be brought low*, 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. and our Saviour himself, even unto hell: *Except your righteousness exceed the* (legal) *righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God*, Matth. 5. 20.

These are the great mistakes and sinful failings of those Adulterous builders, who mix the traditions of men with Gods sacred word, their own inherent holiness with Christs righteousness, and their own merits with Gods mercy; these are those towering structures, that lift up their lofty heads, even to the highest heavens, that arrogantly presume upon the weak and sandy foundation of their own righteousness: which when the strong tempest of Gods incensed wrath shall blow upon it, must

of

of necessity fall, and the fall thereof will be exceeding great, even from their hopes of heaven, to the lowest hell: for their foundation is false, their building weak and high, and their ruine irrecoverable and eternal.

A second sort of carnal builders are those unhappy ones, who build their false belief and vain hopes of heaven, upon the false foundation of obtaining mercy by the merits of Christ, notwithstanding their ungodly resolutions of continuing still in their sins; without either saving faith, to fix surely upon him, lively hope, and holy confidence of heart surely to trust in him, filial fear, willingly and cheerfully, and joyfully, and constantly to honour and obey him, or holiness of life and conversation, to give themselves a living and pleasing sacrifice unto him: These are those unhappy ones, who take up sinful pleasure as a trade; and are thereby traitors to their bodies and tyrants to their souls: These are they who praise God with their lips, when their hearts are far from him; that would gladly serve both God and *Belial*; that *make* (as *David* saith) *long furrows* on their Saviours back, by laying heavy loads of sin upon his shoulders, who came not from his father to incourage sin, (for which he felt his fathers wrath) but to call sinners to repentance: These are those carnal Gospellers, who have only the outward form of godliness, but inwardly deny the power thereof, that, as the Prophets Phrase is, *have made a covenant with death and hell*, *Isaiah* 28. 15. and are most

moſt wretchedly and wickedly reſolved to enjoy the vain and empty pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, although they run the great and fooliſh hazard of loſing Chriſt, and thoſe his bleſſed purchaſes of ſoul contenting joys for ever.

This is the falſe foundation of the carnal building: I will now ſhew thee the deformity, weakneſs and ruine of the building it ſelf, which preſents it ſelf (with all its ſinful faults) unto thee in the view of theſe Five particulars. *Firſt*, In his dead Faith, with which he is become an alien to the promiſes; for, without living Faith ſaith the Apoſtle, (*Heb.* 11. 6.) it is impoſſible to pleaſe God. *Secondly*, In his vain hope, with which he wretchedly deludes himſelf in expectation of that which is not ever likely to be injoyed; he expects a bleſſing, and behold a curſe. *Thirdly*, In his falſe and deceitful peace, wherewith he is lulled aſleep, in his carnal ſecurity, and (without a great miracle of mercy) cannot awake from it; until he is ſummoned by death to appear in Judgement. *Fourthly*, In his imaginary joy (which in *Davids* eye was madneſs and in Gods is fooliſhneſs) with which he is utterly deprived of that unutterable true joy in the holy Ghoſt, whereby the Saints of God are in ſome meaſure made partakers of thoſe ever bleſſed joys to come. And *Laſtly*, In his ſuppoſed ſafety in the ſufferings of a Saviour, whom he cannot comfortably call his, ſeeing he neither knows Chriſts voice nor Chriſt his, and therefore, in the room of this his deluding ſafety,

can

can expect none other than inevitable and eternal ruine.

Firſt then as to his faith, (which ought to be his richeſt evidence for heaven, and the true and ſure foundation of all his enjoyments upon earth,) upon ſtrict examination of it we ſhall find it to be dead, uſeleſs, and uncomfortable, the meer counterfeit and viſard, of that vital, radical, and bleſſed act of Faith, whereby the ſyncere Chriſtian (the ſpiritual builder) by his gratious humility of heart, conſidering the vileneſs and emptineſs of the creature, and the richneſs, fulneſs, and all-ſufficiency of Chriſt, goeth wholly out of himſelf into God, and there ſweetly reſts his ſoul, (in whatſoever ſtate or condition of life the holy providence of God hath plac'd him) in full and ſafe aſſurance of his preſent ſafety, and his future glory. Now that the carnal builders Faith is falſe and counterfeit, is too truly diſcovered by the bent of his affections to the world and worldly enjoyments, by his carnal thoughts, ungratious words, unregenerate actions; by the careleſsneſs and coldneſs of his prayers, (the frequency and fervency whereof, are the ſpiritual breathings thereof, by which we know it lives a ſpiritual life) by his languiſhing hope, frozen charity, decaying zeal, ſick ſelf-denial, fainting hope, and dying heavenly comfort.

From hence it is that S. *Paul* telleth him, *Rom.* 8. that the wiſdom of the fleſh is death; the death of all ſpiritual comforts here, and the eternal death of ſoul and body hereafter; from whence it is, that a carnal builder can be no

no more capable of ſpiritual comfort, than a dead man of coporal: that he can neither delight in Gods precepts, rejoyce in his preſence, mourn in his abſence, truſt in his promiſes, nor hope in his performances: And this is that wretched ſhipwrack which the carnal builder makes of his pretious Faith, without which his fooliſh building is but ſtraw and ſtubble (unable to endure the fierce fire of Gods wrath, againſt ſinners) which will leave him both joyleſs in conſcience, and comfortleſs in Chriſt.

The next to be conſidered of, is his vain hope, and this upon inquiry made, we ſhall find to be falſe and deceitful, far from that bleſſed *hope*, which the Apoſtle tells us, *Rom.* 5. 5. *maketh not aſhamed*; of which we have the reaſon, *Rom.* 8. 24. *Becauſe* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts, by the holy Ghoſt which is given unto us, and whereby we are ſaved*: But this (to their endleſs ſorrow) they will too ſurely find, to be that vain, falſe, and deceitful hope, which *Moſes* gives us a ſad account of, *Deut.* 29. 19. in theſe words, *When he heareth the words of this curſe he bleſſeth himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace although I walk in the ſtubbornneſs of my heart*: and upon which vain and ſinful hope it followeth in the next verſe: *But the Lord will not be merciful unto him, and his fierce wrath and jealouſy ſhall then ſmoak againſt him*: By this we may plainly ſee how wretchedly the carnal builder is miſtaken in promiſing himſelf aſſurance of mercy, and freedom from puniſhment in his neglect of obedi-

obedience, and continuance in ſin; by the one ſinfully ſeparating the end from the means, hell and damnation from ſin; by the other the means from the end, holineſs, and righteouſneſs from eternal happineſs: and (which is the ſaddeſt of all ſinful ſeparations) by both of them, himſelf from Gods bleſſed protection, his holy Spirit, and his ſaving and preventing grace in this life; and his ſweet injoyments of eternal comforts in the life to come: and in all this ſtill vainly hoping to enjoy glory without grace, a plentiful harveſt without a ſeaſonable ſeed time, the rich recompence of reward in Chriſt, without running that holy race which is ſet before him; and his ſo running too, that he may obtain.

How full of falſhood and deceitful flattery this his vain and ſinful hope is, is yet more plainly and clearly diſcovered, by that pregnant proof of Chriſt himſelf in his Parable of the five wiſe, and five fooliſh Virgins, *Matt.* 25. 3. where we ſee the wiſe ones, (the ſpiritual builders) taking oyl with them in their lamps, (a living and a ſaving faith, mortification to ſin, regeneration to righteouſneſs, daily increaſing in grace, and bleſſed perſeverance in all) and the fooliſh ones taking their lamps with them, but without this ſpiritual oyl to inlighten them with grace: the wiſe entering joyfully in with the bridegroom; the fooliſh when the door (of mercy) was ſhut, crying out (in vain and too late) *Lord, Lord, open unto us*; unto whom Chriſts dreadful anſwer is, *Verily I know you not.*

O thou wretchedly miſtaken carnal man, whoſoever thou art, that dareſt to live, and go on boldly and preſumptuouſly in any known ſin, and yet vainly hopeſt in the mercy of a Saviour, what can be more plain than this, to manifeſt the falſhood of thy carnal hope, and the moſt certain truth of thy deplorable condition? As thou loveſt thy ſoul therefore be not any longer thus deluded; O be not thus deceived: the holy Apoſtle tells thee, *Rom.* 8. 13. that God will not be mocked, for what a man ſoweth even that ſhall he reap: If thou ſoweſt to the fleſh, of the fleſh thou ſhalt reap corruption; if to the Spirit, of the Spirit life everlaſting: Conſider well of what thou now readeſt, and the Lord (in much mercy to thee) give thee his timely grace to make a ſanctified uſe of it.

From the ſinfulneſs, and vainneſs of his hope, I am now come to ſhew thee the deceitfulneſs and falſeneſs of his peace, which being weakly raiſed from the vainneſs of his hope, muſt needs alſo be falſe and counterfeit: *Qualis cauſa talis effectus, ſuch as the cauſe is, ſuch muſt be the effect*, is a true maxime in Philoſophy; *& qualis arbor talis fructus, ſuch as the tree is, ſuch will be the fruit*, is as true a Principle in Divinity; his hope therefore being falſe, his peace cannot be true: his conſcience indeed may for a time be lulled aſleep, in the lap of his ſinful luſt (as *Samſon* in the lap of *Dalilah*) and for this time with thoſe in *Jeremiah*, *Jer.* 6. 14. cry peace, peace unto his ſoul, when there is no peace, but a moſt fearful expectation of war and deſtruction; but when God ſhall once thoroughly

thoroughly awaken it, either by ſuddain death or fearful judgement; it will then (Maſtif like) fly in his face and threaten him with the terror of guilt, and horror of puniſhment. When he will (too late) find that there is more true peace, in one hours holy Devotion, than in a whole age of ſinful recreation. This is that dangerous & cheating Mock peace, by which theſe wretched carnal builders are ſo far obdurated by cuſtomary ſinning, that (as the Apoſtles phraſe is) their conſciences are ſeared with a hot Iron, ſo that they are neither ſenſible of their own preſent miſery, nor yet capable of God's gracious impreſſion of mercy.

Saint *Paul* ſaith, *Rom.* 5. 17. That *being juſtified by Faith, we have peace with God.* From whence it will ſadly follow, that where Faith is dead, there hope muſt needs be vain, and peace falſe: and this we have alſo farther verified from the bleſſed lips of Chriſt himſelf to his Diſciples: *My peace* (ſaith Chriſt) *I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you* (not that carnal peace, which is falſe, vain, and momentany; but that inward peace which is choice, true, and eternal:) and this is yet farther confirmed by Gods moſt juſt reproof of thoſe of *Laodicea*, *Rev.* 3. 17. *Thou ſayſt I am rich and abound in all things, and knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* This is the moſt lamentable condition of theſe our carnal builders: Who (while they continue in ſin) are moſt wretched in their dead and deceitful faith, truly miſerable in their vain deluding hope, diſtreſſedly

poor in their false and deceiving peace, blind in their darkened understandings, whose spiritual eye-sight, the sinful pleasures (the God of this World) have put out; and wofully naked, as utterly deprived of Gods saving Grace, and holy presence, and thereby of all his spiritual comforts: yea such (and so strangely deceitful) is the carnal builders peace, that even then when he seemeth to enjoy it, he is at open war with it, even that bloody War of his carnal corruptions which daily fight against the true peace of his soul, and are utter enemies unto it.

From this his false peace must needs arise that his imaginary, momentany joy, with which the carnal builder seems to be so much delighted, that in joy thereof, the spiritual builders joy, and heavenly consolation is accounted foolishness and sorrow with him: but in the truer search thereof we shall find, as the Apostle tells us, 1 *Cor.* 2. 6. *That the wisdome of the world is foolishness with God*; and that it being examined by the touchstone of Gods sacred word, we shall soon find it to be base, false, and counterfeit: Base in its nature, false in its promises, and counterfeit in its performances.

Look now upon the choicest of all these carnal joys, and thou shalt find them all, even in their very highest pitch they can be mounted up to please the sinful appetite of Man, to be but a short Crackling of thorns (as the wise mans phrase is) a suddain blaze, a faint refreshment, which may seem somewhat to warm them, but can never throughly heat them: yea

that

that ſeeming warmth expoſeth them unto great extremity of cold, even the chilling of their ſouls by the ſad abſence of all ſpiritual comforts; and then woe will be unto that ſoul for ever, that can feel no warmth but from this fire; if Grace cannot revive it, Glory ſhall never comfort it. The carnal builder may appear outwardly joyful, when none but the ſincere Chriſtian can be merry at the heart.

There is no better trial of this truth than from his lips who is truth it ſelf, even *Jeſus Chriſt* the righteous; who hath told us, *John* 16. 20. *That we ſhall weep, but the world ſhall rejoice, and that this our ſorrow ſhall be turned into joy, their joy into mourning*; from whence we may ſafely conclude, that there is no true joy but in Godly ſorrow; nor any truer Symptom of that which is falſe than that which is carnal. From whence was that of *Solomon*, *Eccle.* 7. 5. *The heart of the wiſe is in the houſe of mourning, but the heart of fools in the houſe of mirth.* Whatſoever joy therefore it is, which is not ſubſervient unto that of the Spirit, we may truly ſay of it as the woman unto *Saul*: *Why haſt thou deceived me for thou art Saul?* I took thee for my ſervant to obey me, but now I find thee to be my King to rule over me; I embraced thee as Wiſdome, but I find thee folly, thy refreſhments falſe, thy comforts deceitful, thy delights momentany, thy remembrance bitterneſs, and thy ſorrows eternal.

It now only remaineth that we look upon the ſafety of this carnal building, and this we ſhall ſoon ſee to be nothing elſe but inevitable ruine: Ruine of his pretious faith, his richeſt evidence

for heaven: Ruine of that lively hope, the ſure Anchor of his weather-beaten ſoul, in this tempeſtuous Sea of ſin: Ruine of that bleſſed Charity, by which faith is made perfect, and hope lively and ſtrong: Ruine of all his other heavenly Graces, Repentance, Humility, Patience, Zeal, ſelf-denial, and perſeverance; thoſe ſoul adorning Jewels by which ſhe is moſt lovely in the eyes of God, and without which ſhe is both loathſome and deformed: Ruine of that bleſſed peace of God, which paſſeth all our underſtandings, even the very richeſt Jewel of a Chriſtians Cabinet: Ruine of that ſpiritual joy in the Holy Ghoſt, that true and undaunted comfort that can rejoyce in tribulations, and make us exceeding merry in afflictions: Ruine of his Conſcience, of his Comfort, of his ſafety by Gods holy protection in this life, and eternal ruine both of ſoul and body in the life to come.

For the clearer diſcovery hereof, and of the great weakneſs of this ſinful Fabrick, let us yet farther look upon the props and ſhores which he is forced to imploy to ſhore up this his weak and ſinful ſtructure, which (by the weight of ſin, and ſtormy tempeſts of Gods fierce wrath) being once removed (as of neceſſity they muſt) the whole ungodly fabrick will aſſuredly fall, and can never be repaired nor rebuilt.

The firſt of theſe deceitful props is his carnal ſecurity, by which he freeth himſelf from fear of Gods Juſtice, by the inſenſibleneſs of his danger, and his incapableneſs of remedy, and ſpiritual means to prevent it: a ſecond is his preſuming on Gods mercy, even in the very depth

depth of this his sinful misery: a third his fruitless hopes of his after-repentance; and a fourth his weak assurance of Gods gratious forgiveness; all which upon our farther enquiry, we shall find to be false, weak, and insufficient to support his sinful fabrick.

First as to his carnal security; when we see the falsehood of his deceit herein, we shall thereby more easily discover the greatness of his danger: and here, by this his secure sleep in sin, we shall find in the first place that he becomes utterly insensible of his disease (his spiritual lethargy) and is thereby also made incapable of heavenly remedy. He cannot see his own weakness (in the loss of Gods favour, the absence of his holy spirit, his decaying in Grace and declining in goodness) and therefore seeketh not for heavenly help by praiers and tears, by godly sorrow and unfeigned repentance, the happy means ordained to the blessed end, his everlasting health and safety. But when God shall once awake him from his deadly sleep, either by the thunder of his judgments, or the terror of an accusing Conscience, he will then surely find this sinful prop to fail him, his carnal building to be shrewdly shaken, and the whole fabrick greatly endangered.

The *second* (his over bold presuming upon Gods mercy in a Saviours merits (without his being builded on the blessed corner stone Christ Jesus by a true and living faith) is that deceitful prop by which so many millions of mistaken souls, have been for ever ruined. Consider therefore thou unhappy soul, whosoever thou art, that thus daringly reliest on the mercy of

thy God, while thou ſtill continueſt in ſin; Conſider I ſay (with fear and trembling) whether thy righteous God, who ſo much hateth and abhorreth ſin, that for one only ſin, and that but in thought only, caſt the Angels out of heaven, and *Adam* for one ſin out of Paradiſe; whether God, I ſay, will ſuffer thee to dwell in ſin, to draw on iniquity with Cart ropes, to make ſinful proviſions for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof, to ſay, to morrow in ſin ſhall be as to day, and much more abundant, inſtead of thy reſiſting, to tempt even thy temptations, by indulging thy corrupt affections, ſeeking out new ways of ſinful recreations, and ſaying with the drunkard in the *Proverbs*, *I will ſeek it yet ſtill*. Canſt thou be ſo ſenſeleſs to believe that God will favour that in thee, which he ſo ſharply puniſhed in his only ſon? Thinkeſt thou that he was only ſent to ſave ſinners, and not to call them to repentance? Doſt thou argue well to ſay, Becauſe God is merciful, long ſuffering and of great goodneſs, I will therefore abuſe his mercy in ſinning, his patience and long ſuffering by my long continuance in ſin, and his great goodneſs by my great unthankfulneſs? O wretched man whoſoever thou art that thus wickedly reſolveſt, is not this ungratiouſly to make a mock at ſin, to glory in thy ſhame, to reject mercy, to bid defiance to juſtice, to arm God with fury, to provoke him to revenge? O deceive not thy ſelf, whoſoever thou art, that dareſt thus wickedly to go on in thy impiety, in hopes of mercy at the laſt; but tremble rather at the dreadful apprehenſion of his ſevere juſtice. For thou maiſt aſſure thy ſinful ſoul that the longer

longer thy incenſed God is in drawing his bow, the more forcible will he ſend his arrow; let not this weak prop therefore deceive thee; for God will not, nay (with holy reverence be it ſpoken) God cannot be ſo merciful to thee, as to be unjuſt to himſelf. Holy *Job* tells thee, *Job* 14. 17. that thy *tranſgreſſions are ſealed up in a bag*: their natures are examined, their numbers accounted, their growths with all their ſinful aggravations obſerved, and all ſealed up againſt that great and terrible day of the Lord Jeſus; when for want of that mercy which thou ſo ſinfully preſumeſt on, thou ſhalt tremble at his Juſtice, and for ever feel the puniſhment of his ſevereſt wrath.

The *third* prop is his vain promiſe to himſelf of his after-repentance; the weakneſs and ſinfulneſs whereof, thou mayſt plainly diſcover by theſe three particulars: *Firſt*, the longer he continueth in ſin, the farther he is off from grace, the nearer to deſtruction: *Secondly*, his great uncertainty of time to repent in: and *Thirdly*, his far greater of having ſaving Faith to ask it, and a ſure and ſtedfaſt hope to receive it: without which even his very *prayers* become ſin unto himſelf, and thereby (as *Solomon*, ſaith, *Prov.* 28. 9.) *an abomination* unto God, his expectations fruitleſs, and his hopes comfortleſs.

As to the *firſt* of theſe, his long and cuſtomary ſinning with the ſad and dangerous effects thereof; Let us in the firſt place conſider of that fearful ſaying of Almighty God pronounced by the mouth of his holy Prophet

Jeremiah, againſt the rebellious *Iſraelites*, (who had ſo long provoked the Lord with their rebellions againſt him, that they had even wearied out his patience:) *Jer.* 15. 1, 5, 6. *Then ſaid the Lord unto me, though Moſes and Samuel ſtood before me, yet my affections could not be towards this people; caſt them out of my ſight and let them depart from me. Thou haſt forſaken me, ſaith the Lord, and gone backward, therefore will I ſtretch out my hand againſt thee to deſtroy thee, for I am weary with repenting:* By this and the like texts of Gods holy word, whereof the Scripture is full, we may too plainly ſee what the great danger is of deferring our repentance. O how truly bleſſed is that ſoul which by true and timely turning unto God hath eſcaped this danger! Conſider therefore in Gods time (even to Day, the bleſſed day when grace may be had) O thou delaying ſinner, of turning from thy evil ways: if thou findeſt thy ſelf backward to this holy duty now, O think ſeriouſly how averſe thou wilt be unto it hereafter, when ſin is more deeply rooted in thee; the Devil in more ſure poſſeſſion of thee; thy ſinful and corrupt nature more powerfully prevailing againſt thee; the gifts and graces of the ſpirit quite extinguiſhed within thee; and God himſelf (in his Divine aſſiſtance) removed farther off (if not departed quite away) from thee.

As to the *Second* conſideration, the uncertainty of time; how vain is it, for us to aſſure our ſelves of months, and years, to live, when we cannot claim unto our ſelves one ſmall moment as our own? O beware therefore whoſoever

ever thou art that thinkeſt thy ſelf ſure of that which is none of thine, (but wholly in Gods hands, to diſpoſe of it as it ſeemeth beſt unto his godly wiſdom) leſt he ſay unto thee (as unto him in the Goſpel) *Thou fool, this very night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee*: and then where are thy vain hopes of thy after-repentance? thy falſe promiſe therefore is fooliſh, thy expectation vain, thy delay dangerous, and thy hope deſperate.

And *Thirdly*, if he were ſure of time, yet he is moſt uncertain of grace: for as there is a time of calling, ſo there is alſo of rejecting: the bleſſed wind of Gods holy Spirit bloweth both when, where, and upon whom it liſteth; *God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardens*, as S. *Paul* tells us, *Rom.* 9. and woe unutterable be unto that ſoul for ever, whoſe time of calling is once paſt, of hardening come. He that will not graciouſly and ſeaſonably embrace Gods mercy when it is offered, ſhall eternally exalt his Juſtice when it is both too late and in vain deſired; and this is moſt ſadly, and moſt certainly confirmed even by the mouth of God himſelf, and in theſe following words pronounced againſt him, *Prov.* 1. *I have called unto you*, ſaith God, *and ye have refuſed to come, I held out my hand* (of mercy) *and ye would not look towards me: therefore I will forſake you in your extremity; when diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon you: then ſhall you call upon me, and I will not anſwer, you ſhall ſeek me early but you ſhall not find me.* What can be more terrible to affright a ſinner than the ſevere ſentence of an incenſed

God? how dreadful is the pronunciation, how much more dreadful will be the execution? O consider this in time, all ye that forget God, and the eternal good of your own souls; lest your everlasting ruines come too soon, and your repentance too late.

The *Fourth*, and last prop of this decrepid carnal structure, (without which it must eternally be ruined) is his weak assurance of pardon for his sins upon his future repentance. And this is to hope for a certainty out of an uncertainty, an assured forgiveness out of an uncertain repentance, and (which is yet far more dangerous) out of a far greater uncertainty of Gods favourable acceptance (who of a loving father is now become an angry judge) and of his merciful forgiveness, who neither knoweth him as his dutiful and loving child, nor he God as his gratious and most merciful father.

How doubtful and how full of extream danger this weak assurance is, may yet farther appear by that most passionate and compassionate expression of our Saviour himself when he wept bitterly over that rebellious City *Jerusalem*, *Luk.* 19. 42. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, If thou hadst known in this thy day those things that are belonging to thy Peace*; where by reason of his wonderful compassions towards them, with an abrupt apostrophe it follows, *But now they are hid from thine eyes.* O let this wonderful expression of our Saviour towards them, work powerfully on thee in this thy day of grace, who art yet in thy sins; and beg heartily and timely of God, that it may; For know-

know aſſuredly that without thy true, timely, ſerious, and moſt unfained repentance, theſe thy ſinful props will ſadly fail thee, and leave thee to eternal ruine; from which the Lord in his rich mercy preſerve thee, and all thoſe thirſty ſouls that ſeek unto him for thoſe living waters of eternity.

PIOUS ADMONITIONS

Upon the preceding Meditations.

I Having now (with all ſyncerity of heart, plainneſs of ſtyle, and tenderneſs of affection towards thee) ſet life and death, honour and diſgrace, ſafety and ruine before thee, in the view of theſe the ſeveral ſtructures of the ſpiritual and the carnal builders; the earneſt deſire of my ſoul now is, that unto thee whoſoever thou art, that art yet going on with thy carnal and ſinful building (upon thy true repentance) the Spiritual may be found unto thee, life, ſtrength, honour and eternal ſafety; and that it may ſo be, as a Chriſtian I admoniſh thee, and in Chriſts name, and in Chriſts ſtead, I earneſtly beſeech thee, that thou indeavour daily to make a holy and a happy improvement of what thou haſt here read. Conſider, O conſider, (I beſeech thee) that Gods holy word is of great weight, and will have its end, and this ordained end either to thy honour or diſgrace, ſafety or ruine, life or death, ſhall moſt certainly pro-

mote his glory; If thou groweſt not better by it, thou wilt certainly become worſe. In the name and fear of God, therefore, I yet farther admoniſh thee, to add unto thy reading meditation, to thy meditation knowledge, to thy knowledge practice, to thy practice ſyncerity, which is the life of all; and to thy ſyncerity, perſeverance, which is the crown of all; as that alone by which thou haſt a ſweet and ſafe aſſurance, that thy name is written in the book of life.

In the next place I admoniſh thee to think ſeriouſly and often of that far greater and eternal ruine and deformity of this unhappy, carnal building in hell, which thou canſt not here ſee, and which is far too great for me to utter, or for thee to conceive: the moſt deplorable extremity whereof, muſt be left to thoſe unhappy builders to feel who have rejected Chriſt that bleſſed corner ſtone, who as he was a ſtone for them to ſtumble at, (*ſcandalum acceptum non datum*) a ſcandal taken, but not given, in this life, will then as S. *Peter* tells us, 1 *Pet.* 2. 8. become a dreadful rock of offence, to all unhappy ſouls, to all eternity: where, to add to their extremities of ſorrow, no eye ſhall be allowed to pity them, no hand of mercy to relieve them, no heart to relent for them, and where Chriſt our bleſſed corner ſtone, (whom they have refuſed, and who only can relieve them) ſhall for ever hide his tender bowels of compaſſion from them.

Let all this perſwade with thee to ſin no more: to ſin no more wilfully, to ſin no more preſumptuouſly, to ſin no more, ſo as to allow

ſin

ſin to reign over thee, thereby to command thee to obey it in the filthy luſts thereof; to repent ſpeedily (for thou knoweſt not what a day of ſin may bring forth) to live holily, and perſevere gratiouſly, and then thou mayſt aſſure thy ſoul (notwithſtanding all thy former tranſgreſſions) thou ſhalt alſo live joyfully, and die happily.

THE PRAYER.

O Thou God of infinite and everlaſting mercies, who haſt tender bowels of compaſſions, and multitudes of rich mercies, for all thoſe ſinful ſouls that ſue to thee for mercy and forgiveneſs; who delighteſt not to ſee thy creature unhappy, and haſt therefore gratiouſly invited all thoſe weary ſouls that feel themſelves oppreſſed with the weighty burden of their ſins, to come to thee for ſuccour and relief; look down I meekly beſeech thee in much mercy and compaſſion on me thy moſt ungratious and rebellious child, who have long wandered in the ways of wickedneſs, from thee my merciful and loving father, and am now willing and deſirous (by thy mercy) to return unto thee: Lord I am heavy loaden with the weighty burden of my ſins, and (by thy grace aſſiſting) am now come to thee for ſuccour and relief; Lord eaſe me or I faint, Lord ſave me or I periſh, Lord ſeek me or I am loſt for ever; Lord pardon all thoſe grievous failings and offences wherewith I have ſo often and ſo fooliſhly provoked thee, againſt me; Let thoſe my days of ſinning (which I can never recal) be now gratiouſly redeemed

deemed by these my days of sorrowing. O thou God of infinite compassions, look not (I pray thee) upon those my manifold and great transgressions, as they are in themselves, exceeding sinful, and abominable; but behold them I beseech thee, in the beauty and perfections of thy blessed Son: O let his blessed obedience satisfie for my disobedience, his righteousness for mine unrighteousness, and thorough his stripes, let my sinful soul be healed: O give me (for thy mercy sake) that true and living faith that may fix my soul firmly upon him, as that blessed corner stone on which it is most surely builded to eternity; and all false and deceitful foundations, either of the rags of mine own righteousness, of injoying happiness without holiness, and of partaking of thy mercy with continual provocations of thy justice, let my soul utterly abhor: Lord let not any bitterness of thy fatherly chastisements, which my sins have occasioned, extort from me either the least measure of impatience, or beget in me the least degree of distrust: O let me neither complain of thy justice, nor despair of thy mercy; but (as thy weaned child) forgoe willingly what thou denyest me, and receive quietly what thou provideſt for me; That so I may injoy true peace with thee my God, a true and blessed peace in mine own soul, and everlasting peace with thee in thy kingdom; all which I beg of thee for my dear Saviours sake the Prince of Peace, who with his precious bloud hath purchased this blessed peace for me. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the sincere Christian, and his holy helps in his spiritual conflicts.

HE that by his godly sorrow for his sins, his true and timely repentance of them, and his saving faith, is firmly builded on his blessed corner stone Christ Jesus; and hath once thereby escaped the great and cruel bondage both of sin and Satan; and (by Divine assistance) hath now happily and joyfully attained unto the glorious liberty of the children of God, and in some measure had a taste and relish of the soul-contenting sweetness of those their spiritual refreshments; will now doubtless think no time too long, no pains too great, no cost too much, no ornaments too rich, to make his soul ready for Christ, that so she may appear lovely in his eyes, who hath thus freely given her his love, and in whom alone she now knows her self both happily secure, joyfully delighted, and now and ever fully satisfied.

In order whereunto (as unto the greatest and most happy undertaking belonging to a Christian) the devout soul (being now fully and happily resolved by his gratious humility of heart and holy self-denial of his carnal and corrupt affections) to go wholly out of himself into God, and there (in the merits of his Savi-

Saviour) by his mortification to ſin, ſpiritual regeneration, ſanctification to righteouſneſs, and bleſſed perſeverance in all, to reſt himſelf joyfully contented in running this his Chriſtian race which is now (by Gods mercy) ſet before him, for his happy attaining of his heavenly prize in Chriſt Jeſus: Let him for his holy aſſiſtance, and farther help and incouragement herein, make uſe with me of theſe directions following.

Inſomuch as the moſt righteous man alive, is not able of himſelf to run this holy race without Divine aſſiſtance, and ſeeing likewiſe that every good and perfect gift, as the Apoſtle tells us, *Jam.* 1. cometh from above, from the Father of light, whereby our dark underſtandings are ſpiritually inlightned to behold thoſe heavenly things that are belonging to our peace; it mainly therefore concerneth the ſyncere Chriſtian, in the firſt place, daily to ſeek ſuch ſpiritual help by frequent and fervent prayer, as may ſufficiently inable him to gather ſtrength, not only cheerfully to run the Lords race, but alſo powerfully to fight the Lords battels, againſt all thoſe ſinful oppoſitions that ſtrive to ſtop him in his Chriſtian courſe; that ſo at laſt he may obtain that bleſſed prize, that eternal inheritance, which God hath promiſed to him that overcometh, *Revel.* 21. 7. that ſo he may be our God and we his children.

Prayer is that holy violence by which God loves to be overcome, that ſpiritul force, which ſurprizeth his mercy, obſtructeth his juſtice, diverteth his wrath, wreſtleth with his power,

power, overcometh his love, and will not let him go without a ſpiritual advantage: By this it was that *Jacob* ſtrove with God and obtained the bleſſing: By this it was that *Moſes* contended with him for the rebellious *Iſraelites* and obtained the victory: By this it was that *Elias* ſhut up the heavens and it rained not for three years and ſix months, by which alſo it rained again upon the earth: And by this it ever was and now is, that the prayers of the righteous prevail much, (if they be fervent.) God who is all love, hath therefore given himſelf in Chriſt unto thee that he may thereby willingly in him, be overcome by thee: all that he giveth thee, all that he requireth of thee, is to make thee truly happy. Let this therefore perſwade thee to be faithfully, often, earneſt, even importunate with God in thy devotions: when they are thus directed by a lively faith in Chriſt, their true and proper means of obtaining what they ask, unto their bleſſed end, the glory of Almighty God, they cannot return empty.

When thou prayeſt, firſt ſeek thine own heart and then thy God, leſt thy prayers become ſin; and where thou findeſt thy thoughts wandering, recal them, and fix them wholly upon the ſubject thou prayeſt for, and thoſe the bleſſed means to attain it: God who is moſt pure and ſimple in his eternal being, will not admit of adulterated ſervice; when thou only draweſt near unto God with thy lips, and thy heart is far from him, thou only ſpeakeſt, or bableſt (as our Saviours phraſe is) but prayeſt not.

When

When thy soul is thus piously and steadily compos'd, let thy next care be to pray that thou mayst ask in faith; without wavering: thy prayer thus put up, hath Christs promise for a blessing, *John* 16. 23. *Whatsoever ye ask the father in my name by faith without doubting, he will give it you*: How truly blessed is the condition of Gods child, who can but ask and have even whatsoever God in his Divine wisdom knoweth to be needful for him? *No good thing*, saith *David*, *Psal.* 34. 10. *will God withhold from them that love him.* O consider seriously of the necessity, utility and excellency of this holy duty, and let no vain excuses, no barren pretences of this life whatsoever, either divert thee from it, or interrupt thee in it: but labour daily to improve it to thy souls best advantage: Customary carelessness and coldness in thy devotions, will make that tedious unto thee, which by holiness of heart, and earnestness of spirit, will undoubtedly becoms thy souls sweetest comfort and delight.

When thou findest thy self dull and indispos'd to this holy duty, to quicken thy devotions, Remember that this is Satans malice, who seeing that he cannot hinder thine intentions, now labours to corrupt thine affections, by making that seem burdensome unto thee, which is the blessed means to give thee ease: Remember likewise, that what he so powerfully oppoſeth must needs be excellent.

If God deferr to answer thy desires in what thou prayest for, let not thy thoughts be troubled;

troubled; for he who is wiſdom it ſelf knoweth beſt what is fitteſt for thee; but wait thou chearfully the Lords leiſure, and he will at laſt comfort thine heart: this, perhaps, may be for the trial of thy faith, which S. *Peter* tells thee, 1 *Pet.* 1. *is much more pretious than gold which periſheth*, though it be tried with fire: Let therefore thy faith and thy fervency in Prayer, be gratiouſly ſupported with thy frequency and conſtancy: Chriſt bids thee *Pray without fainting*, *Luke* 18. and S. *Paul*, *without ceaſing*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. Pray therefore faithfully, and frequently, and conſtantly, and earneſtly, unto God, that he will gratiouſly beſtow upon thee the ſpirit of Prayer, that when thou prayeſt thou mayeſt ask aright, and ſo receive the bleſſing thou prayeſt for; ſo ſhall the duty be ſweet, and the cloſe ſucceſsful.

When by faithful prayer thou haſt happily and joyfully obtained the graces of Gods holy Spirit to comfort, ſtrengthen and aſſiſt thee in this thy ſpiritual conflict, let thy next care be to nouriſh and cheriſh them with ſuch convenient food, as may ſufficiently ſuſtain and ſtrengthen them.

Be often converſant with holy reading, and heavenly meditation; by theſe thou wilt find thy affections to cool to the world and worldly delights, and much to inflame to God-ward and his glory. He that is a loving and affectionate child will much delight to hear his father ſpeaking to him, to be much in his houſe, and frequent at his table: He that cannot joyfully familiarize himſelf with God

his

his heavenly father in this life, may well fear himself to be one of those cursed ones, whom God will not own as his children in that to come.

Retire therefore often from the world into thy closet, and from thence into thine own heart; search there narrowly for sin, and indeavour timely to remove it. If thou makest not room in thy heart for Gods holy Spirit to dwell there, how canst thou expect him to abide with thee? When thy solitary retirements can faithfully witness unto thee the syncerity of thy heart unto God, thou mayst then joyfully expect that he will come and dwell with thee, and delight in thee to do thee good.

Cherish thy humility by thinking often and seriously of God's free love unto thee, and thine own unworthiness; that thou hast nothing but what thou hast received, that if thou hast received, it thou hast no cause to boast: Consider likewise of the rich prerogatives thou injoyest hereby; the blessed fruition of Gods holy presence, the injoyment of his heavenly graces, the honour of exaltation, by thy growth in grace upon earth, and thy increase of glory in heaven; all which by this thy grace of humility, by the blessed promises of Christ and his Apostles, and of God himself by his holy Prophets, thou hast assuredly confirm'd unto thee. S. *James* tells thee, *Jam* 4.6. that *God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble*: S. *Peter* biddeth thee, 1 *Pet.* 5.6. to *humble thy soul under the mighty hand of God, that he may raise thee in due time*: Christ himself tells thee,

thee, *Matth.* 5. 8. that the *Poor in ſpirit are bleſſed*, and that *theirs is the kingdom of heaven*: and *Matth.* 18. 4. that *whoſoever ſhall humble himſelf and become as a little child, ſhall be the greateſt in the kingdom of heaven*: And God himſelf by the mouth of his holy Prophet ſaith, *Iſaiah* 57. 17. *I dwell in the high and holy place, with him alſo that is of an humble and contrite ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble.* Let theſe rich and high prerogatives incourage thee daily to improve this heavenly mother grace, as that which muſt accompany all the other gifts and graces of Gods holy Spirit in thee, and without which even the very choiceſt of them will become a ſin unto thee. Keep therefore a ſtrict guard upon thy heart that no ſecret inſinuations of pride ſteal in upon thee to deprive thee of it, and of Gods holy Spirit injoyed by it; nouriſh it by the ſight of thine own vileneſs and ſinfulneſs, throughout the whole courſe of thy life; and by the meek example of thy bleſſed Saviour, who humbled himſelf even unto the death for thee: by the holy improvement whereof, thou wilt (as Chriſt himſelf hath told thee) gain reſt unto thy ſoul.

Strengthen the weakneſs of thy faith by the refreſhing ſweetneſs of God's ſaving promiſes, and his never failing performances, who hath gratiouſly aſſured thee, *Iſaiah* 43. 39. that he *will not break the bruiſed reed, nor quench the ſmoaking flax*. Remember to thy comfort that Chriſt now maketh interceſſion for thee, *that thy faith fail not*, and that if he intercedeth the father, he cannot be denied: Comfort thy

ſelf

ſelf therefore in this, that although thy faith (by reaſon of thy ſins) may be now weak, yet becauſe it is living, it is true, and will in time (by Gods gratious aſſiſtance) gather more ſtrength. Pray therefore often and earneſtly unto God for his bleſſed increaſe of it, ſearch thy ſoul narrowly for that ſin which hath occaſioned this ſpiritual decay; and where thou findeſt the breach, there ſpeedily and heartily, (by thy godly ſorrow for it thy true repentance of it, thy holineſs and ſtrictneſs of life after it, and thy ſevere revenge againſt it) make good the repair. When thou art thus much in ſorrow for ſin, and prayer for pardon, thou canſt not fail of being rich in faith.

If thy faith be ſteadfaſt thy hope muſt needs be lively; as holy *David* therefore counſells thee *Pſal.* 17. 14. *hope thou in the Lord, be ſtrong and he ſhall comfort thine heart*: in which that thou mayeſt cheerfully and joyfully and conſtantly be happy, take the Apoſtles Prayer with thee for thy comfort, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. *Now the God of hope fill thee with all joy and peace in believing, that thou maieſt richly abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghoſt.* That thou maieſt thereby alſo ſay with him with comfort and aſſurance, *Bleſſed be God, even the father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead.*

Inflame thy love to God, by the frequent conſideration of his ſtupendious love to thee, who is eſſentially love, and therefore the higheſt and moſt happy object of thy affections.

Such

Such and ſo great is Gods unſpeakable love unto thee, that if thou either owneſt him in the beauty of his eſſence, or the glory of his attributes, if thou either believeſt him in his promiſes, or injoyeſt him in his mercies, thou canſt not chuſe but truly and intirely love him, and for ever cheerfully and joyfully reſign thy Soul and body to him. Bleſſed Lord, who can deny thee love? When we love thee, we injoy thee, and our Souls in thee: This is that amiable glance of our affection that wounds the heart of thy compaſſion, as Chriſt himſelf hath told us, *Cant.* 4. 9. This is that bleſſed grace, by which Faith worketh and becomes lively, and that remains, when faith and hope are vaniſhed; which is the fulfiling of the Law, and the compleating of the Goſpel, *Rom.* 13. 8. that *covereth a multitude of ſins*, 1 Pet. 4 8. and that well pleaſing All that God requireth of thee; and this only to make thee happy here and bleſſed hereafter.

How careful then ought'ſt thou to be of that Jewel that inricheth and remaineth to Eternity? Let thy love to thy Chriſtian brother be increaſed by the holy counſel of thy bleſſed Saviour, *John* 13. 34. *A new Commandment give I unto you, that you love one another, as I have loved you.* Far therefore be it from thy Soul to harbour malice, who dayly art in need of mercy.

Holy ſelf-denial is that bleſſed Grace, that ſpiritual help, by which we mortify our earthly members, of carnal become ſpiritual, are weaned from this wicked world, and inabled to walk holily and perſevere gratiouſly. For the bleſſed improvement whereof, (being a matter

matter of the greatest difficulty upon earth, (as Diametrically opposite to flesh and blood) consider in the first place what it is thou seriously resolvest to forgoe, and wherefore thou partest with the sinful and deceitful pleasures of this life, which are false and transitory, to inherit Christ in whom are all the treasures both true and Eternal. Consider next with Saint *Paul*, how great an honour thou possessest in this thy gratious self-denial, as being found worthy of the Cross of Christ, by which thou art therefore here conformed to his earthly image, that hereafter thou maiest bear the image of the Heavenly. Consider yet farther, of the glorious combats of the Saints in their self-denials of these outward and sinful injoyments, their pleasures, profits, preferments, liberties, even life it self, to possess Christ; of which thou hast examples both blessed and abundant, in the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs and suffering Saints of God in all Ages; all of them patient and constant self-deniers upon Earth, and now glorious triumphers in Heaven. In the next place let thy thoughts be often busied with a strict and narrow search of the natural bent of thine affections, and where thou findest them to swerve from Christs Doctrine and example, give them a suddain check, and bridle them from breaking loose from thee into sinful liberty. And last of all, use holy abstinence, as an especial help unto thee: be willingly contented with S. *Paul*, to be in fastings often, and in prayers continually, thereby to beat down thy body that thy spirit may rejoyce: When by this thy holy self-denial thou art thus crucified,

cified to the world, thou wilt live joyfully to thy self and blessedly to Christ.

These are those holy Christian helps for exercising and improving of the heavenly graces, which by thy daily practice of them and Gods blessing upon them, will much enable thee to go on cheerfully and joyfully in thy spiritual regeneration, (which is the total change of thy corrupt nature, and without which Christ himself tells thee, *John* 3. 3. thou canst *not enter into the Kingdome of heaven*) to run the holy race of Gods commandments with pleasure and delight; to fight the Lords Battailes with boldness and courage; to take up the Cross of Christ with cheerfulness and joyfulness, and thereby to suffer afflictions and tribulations with contentedness and patience; to be joyful under them and thankful for them; to account all things, with *Paul*, but loss and dung in compare of Christ, and him crucified; to rejoyce with joy unspeakable and glorious, in thy being made partaker of the sweet enjoyments of the Saints in this life, and in some measure of the tasts of those refreshments in the life to come, and in all these to persevere with holy constancy, and heavenly comfort. For thy farther encouragement and assistance wherein make use with me of these farther directions following.

When thou art tempted unto sin, remember that thy life is a spiritual warfare, full of great dangers and extream difficulties; that Christ is thy Commander, and Heaven thy Countrey; that thou hast many potent enemies abroad, that will strongly invade it, many close ones at home that seek secretly to betray it; for as the

Apostle tells thee, thou fightest not only *against flesh and bloud*, but *against Principalities and powers in spiritual places*, Eph. 6. 12. And let all this incourage thee to stand thy Christian ground with confidence and boldness, and to fight the Lords battel with undauntedness of spirit, and all spiritual advantage. Remember that thy leader now looketh on, that thou hast promised thy self Christs souldier and servant in thy baptism, that thou art now in the field to be proved; if thou now overcomest thou shalt rejoyce in earth, and triumph in heaven. Thou hast his promise for it, who is *Alpha* and *Omega*, whose promises are all *yea* and *Amen*. *He that overcometh shall inherit all things*, Rev. 21. 7.

For thy farther encouragement in these thy spiritual conflicts, take yet a farther view of these five following considerations. The first touching the honour of thy service; the second, the justice of thy quarrel; the third, the love and skill of thy commander; the fourth, thy great advantages in fight; the fifth, thy certainty of pay.

First as to the honour of thy service, it is so truly noble, that thy name is listed and enrolled in heaven, as thou hast it *Heb.* 12, 23. *Ye are the assembly of the first born who are inrolled in Heaven*; by which honourable ingagement, we have power given unto us to become the Sons of God, as we have it *John* 1.12. in these words, *As many as received him* (their spiritual Commander) *to them he gave power to be the Sons of God: and if Sons, then heirs of God*; and as S. *Paul* assureth us, *Rom.* 8. 17. *joynt-heirs with Christ*,

Christ, and this is that inheritance for which thou art now to fight.

The *Second* is the justness of thy cause; and this is clearly made out unto thee in thy fighting for thine own, and valiantly destroying all that labour to deprive thee of it, and not only so but study likewise to inslave thee into that captivity, where thou shalt not only be wretched, and poor, and blind, and naked, and miserable, in this Life (as thy Commander Christ Jesus himself assureth thee, *Rom.* 3. 17.) but cursedly wretched also in the life to come; and that (to the aggravation of thy sorrow) pronounced too by his lips, (whom (in yielding to temptation) thou not only cowardly forsakest, but also treacherously and falsly takest up rebellious armes against) in these irrevokable and heart breaking words (*Math.*25. 41.) *Go ye cursed into everlasting torments prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, &c.

Thy *Third* incouragement is the love, power, and skill of thy Commander, who hath fought this spiritual combat before, and thereby overcome both sin, Satan, Death and Hell for thee; whereby their powers are so far weakned, that if thou standest but thy ground, thou art sure of Victory: and this (to thy comfort) is that which Saint *Paul* tells thee, *Rom.* 8. 37. that in him thou hast not only overcome, but art *more than conquerour*.

A *Fourth* incouragement is thy great advantage in fight by the cowardice and weakness of thy spiritual enemies, and thy confident assurance of thy victory in Christ. The first the Apostle confirmes unto thee,

Jam. 4. 7. *Resist the Devil* (saith he) *and he will flee from thee*: The second Christ himself thy blessed Commander assures thee of, *John* 16. 33. *be of good cheer* (saith he) *for I have overcome the world*: and if the spirit be willing, though the flesh be weak, thou canst not want both Christs comfortable assistance, and his gratious acceptance.

Thy *Fifth* and last incouragement is the certainty of thy pay, for which thou hast his gratious promise who is truth it self, even Christ thy Commander, in whose truly honorable service thou hast ingaged, and from whose hand of mercy thou shalt receive thy pay, even the glorious recompence of thy heavenly inheritance: when thy work is done thou shalt be sure of thy wages, not of merit but of mercy; not for thy work sake, but for Christs promise sake; in whose all satisfying merits thy weak and sinful indeavours here shall be there both gratiously accepted and gloriously rewarded.

These holy remembrances may suffice thee for incouragement in these thy spiritual conflicts: It now remaineth that I farther shew thee some holy rules by way of caution and Security, by which thou mayest with comfort make thy Spiritual resistance, and with safety to thy Soul and honour to thy saviour, gain the happy victory. The first of these is that thou keep thy self close to thy Generals Orders: that is, that thou presume not to act any thing, without or beyond his command: the second, that thou observe strictly thine own military duties, that so thy Spiritual enemy have no advantage given him by thy careless neglect.

The

The blessed orders of the Lord Jesus thy Commander in Chief, are principally these: *First*, that thou serve him sincerely out of true and hearty affection to him; not for what reward thou expectest from him, but for that beauty and excellency thou findest in him: *Secondly*, that thou be ever reay furnished with Spiritual Armes, and Ammunition: *Thirdly*, that thou keep thy spiritual guards sure, that thy Spiritual enemy break not in upon thee unawares, and so surprise thee at this sinful advantage: *Fourthly*, that thou daily walk the round, examine well and amend thy breaches, that so thy spiritual enemy may have no incouragement to give an assault to enter where he finds thee weakest: *Fifthly*, that thou search and examine thine own heart narrowly for traitors at home: and *Sixthly* and last of all, that thou keep thy self alwayes ready in thy military posture to fight the Lords battels valiantly and constantly abroad. Thy love to God is thy going wholly out of thy self into him, which in Christ Jesus thy blessed Commander is thy higheſt, holiest and most happy object. Thy being furnished with armes and ammunition is that whole armour of God, which Saint *Paul* bids thee put on: the helmet of Salvation by the Merits of Christ, the breast-plate of righteousness, the shield of Faith, the sword of the Spirit, that divides between the joynts and the marrow, the carnal and the spiritual man, & the shooes of the preparation of the Gospel, the affections of thy soul by which thou walkest cheerfully and joyfully in the wayes of Christ.

The keeping of thy spiritual guards is with the Prophet *Jeremiah*, to set a watch before the door of thy heart that thou offend not in thy thoughts: with the Prophet *David Psal.* 39. 2. before the door of thy mouth that thou offend not with thy tongue; and with Saint *Paul*, upon the door of thine actions, in abstaining even from the very least appearance of evil; that so thy thoughts may be pure, thy words gratious and thine actions holy. The examination and repair of thy breaches is to reckon daily with thy conscience, to search narrowly for sin, and where thou findest thy self failing, to sue humbly and earnestly for grace, to beg heartily for pardon, and never to give thy Soul rest until thou hast obtained a comfortable assurance of it; and for the repair and making good of this thy spiritual breach to summon all thy spiritual forces, to bear a deadly hatred against it, and against thine own corrupt nature for yielding too easily unto it; that so where sin (by this sinful breach) hath abounded, there grace by this thy holy repair may abound much more; and even thy very sins at last (through him that loveth thee) may not only work, but work powerfully together for the best to thine advantage. The narrow search for Traitors at home, is to fortifie thy knowlede by the blessed principles of Gods sacred word; that thou harbour there no seeming shews, no specious pretences, no gross lyes, no false proposals and ungrounded principles to betray thee: Satan hath many wayes to couzen thee; when he cannot divert the streames of thy affections, he will then labour to corrupt

rupt the fountain of thy Knowledge: Keep thy self close therefore to the sacred rule of Scripture, beware of private interpretations, pray constantly and devoutly for a blessing upon thy reading of it, and fear not the success: Satan cannot hurt thee but by thee; he only can incline the will by corrupting the understanding, (and wo to us for ever if he might compel it) he is only the father begetting, but our corrupt hearts are the mother conceiving; it is impossible there can be danger abroad, if there be no treason at home. Look well therefore to be wisely principled in holy concernments; if Satan can suprize thy head, thy heart cannot long hold out, and when he hath once gained thine affections he will with ease command thine actions. And lastly, thy keeping thy self alwayes ready in thy Military posture, is thy daily and thy gratious improvement of the graces of Gods holy spirit, by which thou maist be ever readily, willingly and powerfully able to withstand the potent onsets of thy spiritual Enemies, to break through their thickest ranks, and, with S. *Paul*, to crucify those sinful lusts that fight against the soul; until at last by gratious perseverance thou canst say with joy unspeakable with holy *Paul*, 2 *Tim.*4. 7. *I have fought a good fight, I have kept the Faith, I have finished my course: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not unto me only but unto all them that love and expect the day of his appearing.*

Thy Military duties are especialy these three; thy faithful watchfulness by fervent prayer,

thy strong and secure guards, by holiness of life and conversation, and thy gratious pressing hard forward, towards the holy mark, for the rich prize of thy high calling in Christ Jesus by blessed perseverance. By prayer thou obtainest Divine help in time of greatest necessity: By holiness thou art powerfully defended against the violent assaults of Satans Temptations: By perseverance all the other graces are both carried on with courage, and crowned with Victory.

And here for thy farther incouragement thou hast examples of these holy Combatants; where thou maist see some of them overborn with multitudes of spiritual enemies, and yet stoutly resisting; others recoyling and yet gratiously recovering; others treading under foot the pleasures, profits, honours, riches, friends, acquaintance, liberties, even life it self, for Christs sake: Here thou hast *Eliah* valiantly fighting of it out unto the last man, and then honourably retreiting; as we have it 1 *Kings* 19 10. *They have slain thy Prophets, and defiled thine altars, and I only am left alive*: Here thou hast holy *David* beaten down by the flesh, and yet gratiously rising again by the spirit: St. *Paul* buffetted by Satan by temptations, and beating of him back by prayers, and by his blessed victory trampling upon the sinful vanities of life and counting all but loss and dung for Christ sake; Patient in persecutions, joyful in afflictions, not only ready to be bound but even to dye so, he may live in Christ: The primitive Christians in bonds for Christ and his glorious liberty, and the holy

holy Martyrs joyful in death for the blessed injoyment of the Crown of life: all of them gratiously persevering and gloriously overcoming.

And if all this be not yet enough to make thee a joyful and syncere Christian, but that thou still findest thy self fainting in the inward man, and cowardly yielding to the strong assaults of Satan, and thine own corruptions, while others of Christs faithful Souldiers are still pressing hard forward, in this good fight of faith, and manfully fighting against Satan, the world, and their own corruptions, sweating, bleeding, dying daily unto sin to possess Christ and his righteousness: In the last place consider of the glorious triumph of this thy spiritual conquest; and the rich spoils that thou shalt surely gain hereby; and if all this move thee not to courage in thy Christian calling, I have then nothing farther to inforce upon thee, but to let thee know, that (in thy sinful and thy most unworthy forsaking him, who hath shed his pretious blood for thee; and thy perfidious serving him, who hath already (by those many wounds in thy conscience) drawn so much blood from thee) thou art lost for ever.

By this thy happy victory, in the first place thou shalt gain thy deliverance from the bondage of sin, and slavery of Satan; and injoy the glorious liberty of the Sons of God; who's service is perfect freedom: By this thou gainest the most sweet injoyment of Gods gladding spirit, from whence ariseth that inviolable and invaluable peace of God which passeth all

our underſtandings: and that ineffable joy in the holy Ghoſt, which this vain world and all the glory thereof can neither give unto thee, nor ſhall ever be able to take away from thee. By this thou gaineſt thoſe riches that inrich thee to eternity; for *godlineſs is great* (yea, even the greateſt) *gain*; the gain of thy inward comforts, of thy outward conſolations, and of thy eternal rewards; for which thou haſt the faithful promiſes of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, 1 *Tim.* 6. 6. and *Heb.* 1. 2. By this thou gaineſt that true wiſdom, which is of eternal duration; the fear of God is the beginning of it, and the injoyment of Chriſt (in whom are all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge,) the bleſſed end thereof, and yet eternally without end: By this thou gaineſt honour, even the very height of honour to be attained on earth, the Soveraignty and command of thy corrupt affections: by which thou ſetteſt laws and bounds to their unlimited deſires: By this thou gaineſt thoſe immaculate pleaſures by which thy ſoul is conſtantly delighted, even thy bleſſed contentments in doing of thy heavenly fathers will: ſo that thou canſt now with happy comfort ſay with holy *David*, *Pſal.* 119. *Behold my delight is in thy commandments; and I will not forget thy word: To do thy will is ſweeter unto me than to injoy thouſands of gold and ſilver: Lord, what pleaſure have I in keeping thy commandments! The words of thy mouth are ſweeter unto me than the honey and the honey comb: therefore doth my ſoul love them.* Theſe are thoſe bleſſed ſpoils, thou gaineſt here in this kingdom of grace, by

this

this thy blessed victory: What those blessed rewards are, which are prepared by thy Saviour for thee in that of glory (if thou overcomest) are infinitely greater, and far more transcendantly glorious, than are possible to be utter'd or conceiv'd by mortal man. Comfort thy self therefore, in this, (and rest in full assurance of it) that if thou injoyest not there, what is either lawful or possible for thee to desire here, thou shalt there eternally enjoy more than thou canst here possibly desire.

It is no wonder now to hear S. *Augustine* after his conversion, breaking forth into this joyful and Divine expression; *Quàm suave mihi subitò factum est carere suavitatibus nugarum, quas olim amittere metus erat, nunc demittere gaudium est: ejiciebas enim tu domine, omni suavitate dulcior, & intrabas pro iis omni corde interior: How suddenly, O Lord, hast thou made it sweet unto me, to forgoe the* (sinful) *sweetness of these earthly trifles; those vain pleasures which formerly I was afraid to lose, I now rejoyce to banish: thou O Lord diddest thrust them out, and thou my God art entered in, who art sweeter unto me than all earthly sweetness, and nearer unto me than the closest secrets of mine own heart.* From this holy victory it was that holy *David*, *Psal.* 95. 1. after his Repentance, brake forth (in holy triumph) into that his joyful *Venite exultemus: Come let us sing together, let us heartily rejoyce in* (God) *the strength of our salvation.* From hence also it was that holy *Paul*, after his hard conflict with the law of his members rebelling sinfully, and constantly against the

law of his mind (after his bleſſed victory obtain'd by grace) breaks forth at laſt (with thankfulneſs of heart and joyfulneſs of lips) into this his ſweet aſſurance of delivery from death, *Rom.* 8. *I thank my God thorough Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* And from hence alſo it is that the righteous (as *David* tells us) is bold as a Lion, well able to incounter both the ſtrongeſt temptations, and the ſoreſt afflictions; that they are both couragious in life, victorious in death, and triumphant after death.

Conſider now I beſeech thee, both timely, and ſeriouſly, and gratiouſly, of what thou haſt here read, and the Lord Jeſus (whoſe faithful Souldier thou profeſſeſt thy ſelf to be) give thee a ſanctified heart, to make a bleſſed improvement of it to thy ſouls ſpiritual advantage; that thou mayſt thereby both readily and joyfully forgoe the falſe injoyments of ſin for a ſeaſon, to inherit thoſe rivers of ſoul ſatisfying pleaſures that remain for ever; which the Lord in rich mercy hath prepared for all thoſe, whom he ſhall find to be ſincere Chriſtians.

PIOUS ADMONITIONS

upon the preceding Meditations.

LEt this, in the firſt place, admoniſh thee, to fight the Lords battels with holy ſyncerity, Chriſtian courage and gratious perſeverance, and never to give thy ſoul reſt until thou

thou art compleatly furnished with that whole armour of God whereby thou mayst be powerfully inabled to make thy spiritual resistance; lest when thou hast begun in the spirit, thou end in the flesh, and so of the flesh thou reap nothing but corruption. Remember and seriously consider that the promise is to him that overcometh: Canst thou overcome and not fight? canst thou fight and not be furnished with weapons? is there any weapon more powerful than that of the Spirit, that two edged sword that cutteth every way, wheresoever it goeth? canst thou use this weapon as thou oughtest, without hewing down temptations, and getting ground of corruptions, without wounding and killing thy corrupt affections, without subduing thy unruly passions, and subjecting wholly to the blessed will of thy commander Christ Jesus? Let this therefore perswade with thee, to vow thy self a professed enemy to all ungodliness; for thy better performance whereof observe these following cautions.

That thou mayst abstain from sin, be sure to avoid the least appearance of it: there is often most danger in those things which seem most necessary, if not used with moderation: Christian liberty may easily be mistaken, and become licentious wickedness; if thy outward liberty be not subservient to thine inward, thou wilt soon find that the freedom of thy body, will be the bondage of thy soul.

Unto each measure of sin allow a due proportion of sorrow; let thy measure of pollution have

have its due meaſure of ſanctification: That ſin which hath been chiefly reigning over thee, let it at ſet hours be ſolemnly revenged by thee; and when any temptation gives a ſtrong aſſault upon thee, remember that thou fighteſt not the Lords battel only, but thine own alſo; that thou art now in the field with Satan fighting for thy heavenly kingdom; that if thou giveſt ground he will gather advantage; if thou reſiſteſt he will fly from thee; and that this thy gratious reſiſtance ſhall have a glorious and eternal reward.

When thou canſt thus fight, I dare pronounce thee bleſſed, and aſſure thy ſoul of victory, even the happy victory over thy ſelf, the world, ſin, Satan, death and hell, and that there is laid up for thee a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord thy righteous judge ſhall give unto thee at the bleſſed day of his appearing.

THE PRAYER.

O Moſt holy and for ever bleſſed Jeſus, the Sovereign Commander, holy director, bleſſed preſerver, and moſt gratious comforter, of all thoſe ſinful ſouls that ſue to thee for mercy and forgiveneſs: Behold me, I moſt meekly beſeech thee, thy weak and ſinful ſervant in much mercy and compaſſion towards me, who am utterly unworthy even of the very leaſt of all thy mercies, and of all thy truth which hitherto thou haſt vouchſafed towards me. For with ſhame and ſorrow, Lord, I confeſs (to the

ſhame

ſhame of my profeſſion, the high diſhonour of thy great and glorious name, the griеving of thy good Spirit, and the terrour of mine own accuſing conſcience) that I have not only too often cowardly run from thee, by my too often and too eaſie yielding to the power of temptations, but alſo moſt perfidiouſly taken up arms againſt thee, by my too much indulging mine own ſinful corruptions; whereby in ſtead of my dying daily unto ſin, in treading under foot my unruly affections, I have moſt wickedly turned thy grace into wantonneſs, and thereby moſt ungratiouſly trampled thy moſt pretious blood under my feet. Have mercy upon me O Lord, have mercy upon me; according to the multitude of thy tender compaſſions, blot out the multitude of theſe my woful and moſt ſinful tranſgreſſions; hear me O Lord and help me, and receive me again gratiouſly into thy favour: relieve my miſery, ſupport my weakneſs, accept my willingneſs, forgive my ſinfulneſs, and ſo ſtabliſh me with thy free ſpirit, that my heart may be ſyncerely, and firmly, and conſtantly fixed on thy ſervice, that ſo I may again receive the voice of joy and gladneſs: O give me that integrity of heart and undauntedneſs of ſpirit, that may carry me on boldly, and joyfully, and faithfully, in thy ſervice: let me find no ſweetneſs but in thy love, no pleaſure but in thy grace, no comfort but in my full, and ſweet, and ſafe aſſurance of my preſent ſafety, and my future glory: Grant this dear Lord for that pretious blood ſake which thou haſt freely ſpilt for me. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the true zelot, and his holy exerciſes and improvements of this heavenly grace.

HAving (by the bleſſed guidance of Gods holy Spirit) in the preceding Chapter led thee ſafely thorough the manifold and great dangers of thy ſpiritual warfare, and there ſhewed thee the ſeveral uſes and advantages of all thy ſpiritual weapons, in the daily exerciſes and improvements of the heavenly graces; I am now come in the laſt place, as the bleſſed cloſe of all, to ſhew thee the true nature, uſe and excellency of zeal, which is the very life and ſpirit of all, that ſo as thou haſt already learned to be ſyncere in thy profeſſion, thou mayſt hereby alſo learn to be truly devout, and fervently zealous in all thy Chriſtian actions, and thereby happily grow up unto that bleſſed ſtate of grace, that may undoubtedly aſſure thee of thy future ſtate of glory.

When God ſent out his ſurveying Angels, in the days of *Zachary*, to paſs thorough the circuits of the earth, and examine the actions of men, *Zach.* 1. 10. the anſwer they returned of their obſervations and travels was, that the whole earth ſate ſtill and was at reſt; every one quietly contented and ſecure in their own ways; And if the Lord ſhall now ſend forth his

his faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel, (who are called the Angels of his Churches, *Rev.* 3.) to make a ſtrict inquiry into the lives and converſations of his people, in this our ſinful Iſland, in this old and cold age of the world, what other anſwer may we expect from them, than that the whole nation lieth in lukewarmneſs, that loathed temper which the Lord ſo much abominates, that as his own phraſe is, *Rev.* 3. 15, 16. to thoſe of *Laodicea*, *Becauſe thou art neither hot nor cold, I will ſpew thee out of my mouth.* The Lord in mercy grant that our decay of heat and fervour, may not be a ſad prognoſtick of our diſſolution (of the removal of our golden Candleſtick as it was of theirs,) but that it ſtill may glorioufly hold forth the bleſſed light of the Goſpel; that ſo we may never be wanting of ſome true zelots to ſtand in the gap for us, for the removal of thoſe ſore judgments, which (by reaſon of our many ſins, and this our great lukewarmneſs,) we may well think and fear are going out againſt us.

This heavenly fire hath ever been a great ſtranger upon earth; few in all ages have felt the heat of it, fewer have known the true nature, and the bleſſed effects of it, and in this lukewarm age in which we live, few or none there are that feel ſo much as the comfortable warmth of it; and too many prophane libertines, and key-cold worldlings we have amongſt us, that quite put it out. The earneſt deſire therefore of my ſoul is, by theſe my weak indeavours (and Gods bleſſing upon them) to rake it out of the almoſt cold embers of Oblivion, and to reinkindle it in the hearts

hearts of all thoſe whom holy providence ſhall direct unto theſe lines, that when they come to know and feel the Sovereign uſe and excellency of it, they may utterly abhor lukewarmneſs and indifferency in religion, be heartily in love with it, and be zealous.

Zeal taken generally, was by the ancients defined to be an high intention of love: By the Schoolmen, to be a compound of love and anger: By our later Modern Divines more truly, to be an high intenſion of all the affections, paſſionately diſpoſing them to all their proper Objects: But this being only general, is not that heavenly grace of zeal, which is more eſpecially belonging to the ſyncere Chriſtian, which differs not from the other in its nature, but only in its Original, and Object.

True Chriſtian zeal therefore is a ſpiritual heat, or holy fervency wrought in the hearts of Gods children, by the power of Gods Spirit, whereby all the affections of their ſouls which were formerly benummed, are now made more earneſt and active in his ſervice, to the beating down of ſin, and advancement of his glory. And this deſcription of this holy grace, we have warranted by *David* in the vehemency of his expreſſions for God & his glory; and by S. *Paul* in the heat of his affections for Chriſt and his Church; both of them burning in ſpirit, whereby they were both inflam'd in their affections and zealous in their actions. Thus we have *David*, *Pſal.* 119. crying out with fervency of ſoul, *Lord, how do I love thy Law? Thine enemies I hate with a perfect hatred. Thy teſtimonies are the very joy of mine heart:* and

Pſal.

Pſal. 136. *Mine eyes guſh out with rivers of tears, becauſe men keep not thy law.* Here we have his love wonderful, his hatred perfect, his joy raviſhing, his grief immoderate, all of them zealouſly relating unto God and his glory: And thus we have S. *Paul* out of the fervency of his affections unto Chriſt and his Church, carried on earneſtly and actively thorough all the difficulties of life, and threatnings of death; as we have it, 2 *Cor.* 11. *In labours more abundant, in ſtripes above meaſure, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of his own nation; in perils among the gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderneſs*; with other his afflictions; beſides his conſtant care of the Churches; for whoſe ſafety and Chriſts glory he was not onely ready to be in bonds, but willingly to ſuffer death.

This is that fervency of ſpirit which Chriſt beſtoweth on his ſpouſe, when he is ſaid, *Cant.* 4. 9. to lead her into the Wine-cellar of his love. This is the ſouls wings to carry her up unto the throne of grace, without which (as without that typical elementary fire in the law, which was never to be extinguiſhed) no ſpiritual ſacrifice of prayer can be accepted: Yea, ſuch and ſo ſupreamly excellent is this holy fire, that it is as holy wings even to the Seraphims themſelves, as we have it, *Heb.* 1. 7. *He maketh his ſpirits Miniſters, & his meſſengers a flame of fire*: and which is yet infinitely more, ſuch is the ſuper-ſupream tranſcendency of it, that even God himſelf is well-pleaſed to own it, as peculiar to his own Eſſence, as we have it *Deut.* 29. 20. *The zeal of the Lord of hoſts ſhall*

do

do this. And thus thou haſt briefly ſeen what Chriſtian zeal is, which is thy firſt ſtep to be zealous.

In the ſecond place we muſt warily diſtinguiſh true zeal from its counterfeits: for in this frantick age of the world, and even in this ſinful Iſland too, wherein we live, as well as under the law, there are ſwarms of *Nadabs* and *Abihus* that will be boldly offering up their falſe and uncouth fires, thoſe ſinful and unacceptable ſacrifices of their own, (of which the late unhappy times have had too ſad experience) which the Lord abhors as not commanded by him, and all good men deteſt and pitty, as bringing with them great diſhonour to Almighty God, reproach and infamy upon his faithful and elect children who are truly zealous of his glory, and deſtruction on the heads of thoſe that are partakers with them.

That thou mayſt be the better able to avoid it, thou mayſt know it by this following deſcription; Counterfeit zeal is a falſe fire, kindled in mans heart by the corruption of the fleſh, and the ſuggeſtion of Satan, by which adventitious heat, the ſouls vital and radical heat is deſtroyed, from whence it receiveth life and motion, and a malignant and diſtempered heat is contracted, a certain forerunner of ſpiritual ſickneſs and death, which is plainly foreſeen by theſe inſuing ſymptoms.

The *firſt* is a diſtempered pulſe which beats high and haſtily, by the violence of which motion, the bloud being overheat, the ſpirits are inflamed, and thereby the radical and vi-

tal

tal heat conſumed, from whence muſt needs follow (without timely remedy) diſcontinuity of parts, and diſſolution of the whole. It fareth no otherwiſe with the ſoul, than with the body; for by this diſtempered heat the true and zealous heat of the heart is languiſhing, and the heat of fury prevailing, the bleſſed ſpirit of meekneſs turned into the hot ſpirit of contention, of which S *Paul* ſaith, *the Church of God hath no ſuch cuſtome;* and which muſt needs cauſe, not only diſcontinuity of parts in this diſtempered Chriſtian, the weakening and diſabling of the gifts and graces of Gods holy Spirit in him, but even the diſſolution of the whole, the Church of God, of which he is a diſtemper'd member. Theſe are thoſe furious *Jehues*, who pretend zeal and intend kingdoms.

A *ſecond* Symptome is the outward flushings of the face, without ſpiritual warmth at the heart: theſe are rather obſtructions of grace, than diſtributions of good ſpirits; which unnatural heats (as the matter that feeds them decayeth (like blazing Comets) will extinguiſh into vapour: ſuch were the trumpeters of Alms in Chriſts time, and ſuch are the pretending reformers of Religion in ours.

The *third* Symptome is a depraved palate, ariſing from a corrupt ſtomach (between which (by reaſon of the nervous parts) there is a natural ſympathy) which can reliſh nothing but what is ſuitable to its vitiated quality: This is that ſingularity of heart, that heighth of pride that can reliſh no Doctrine but

do this. And thus thou hast briefly seen what Christian zeal is, which is thy first step to be zealous.

In the second place we must warily distinguish true zeal from its counterfeits: for in this frantick age of the world, and even in this sinful Island too, wherein we live, as well as under the law, there are swarms of *Nadabs* and *Abihues* that will be boldly offering up their false and uncouth fires, those sinful and unacceptable sacrifices of their own, (of which the late unhappy times have had too sad experience) which the Lord abhors as not commanded by him, and all good men detest and pitty, as bringing with them great dishonour to Almighty God, reproach and infamy upon his faithful and elect children who are truly zealous of his glory, and destruction on the heads of those that are partakers with them.

That thou mayst be the better able to avoid it, thou mayst know it by this following description; Counterfeit zeal is a false fire, kindled in mans heart by the corruption of the flesh, and the suggestion of Satan, by which adventitious heat, the souls vital and radical heat is destroyed, from whence it receiveth life and motion, and a malignant and distempered heat is contracted, a certain forerunner of spiritual sickness and death, which is plainly foreseen by these insuing symptoms.

The *first* is a distempered pulse which beats high and hastily, by the violence of which motion, the bloud being overheat, the spirits are inflamed, and thereby the radical and vi-

tal

tal heat consumed, from whence must needs follow (without timely remedy) discontinuity of parts, and dissolution of the whole. It fareth no otherwise with the soul, than with the body; for by this distempered heat the true and zealous heat of the heart is languishing, and the heat of fury prevailing, the blessed spirit of meekness turned into the hot spirit of contention, of which S *Paul* saith, *the Church of God hath no such custome;* and which must needs cause, not only discontinuity of parts in this distempered Christian, the weakening and disabling of the gifts and graces of Gods holy Spirit in him, but even the dissolution of the whole, the Church of God, of which he is a distemper'd member. These are those furious *Jehues*, who pretend zeal and intend kingdoms.

A *second* Symptome is the outward flushings of the face, without spiritual warmth at the heart these are rather obstructions of grace, than distributions of good spirits; which unnatural heats (as the matter that feeds them decayeth (like blazing Comets) will extinguish into vapour: such were the trumpeters of Alms in Christs time, and such are the pretending reformers of Religion in ours.

The *third* Symptome is a depraved palate, arising from a corrupt stomach (between which (by reason of the nervous parts) there is a natural sympathy) which can relish nothing but what is suitable to its vitiated quality: This is that singularity of heart, that heighth of pride that can relish no Doctrine but

but what is consonant to its own humour; from whence it is that our wholsome food in the Church of *England*, both of Doctrine and Discipline, are bitter to their tastes, and loathsome to their stomachs. These are those zelots whom S. *Paul* tells us of, 1 *Cor.* 8. 2. *who are puffed up, thinking they know something when they know nothing as they ought.* These are those that will needs be Christs sheep, but will not hear Christs voice in his Gospel commands, by their willing obedience to the higher powers.

A *fourth* Symptome, is that distemper'd heat, which cannot keep it self where it ought in its own center, the heart, principally to nourish and cherish that, but too profusely diffuseth it self to the exteriour members, unnaturally to offend them; and this is that overmuch censoriousness of false zeal, arising from the false opinion of their own abilities in grace and goodness: These are those zelots that our Saviour brandeth with the name of Hypocrites, that will be casting out the mote from their brothers eye, while they are willingly contented with the beam in their own: Whereas the true zelot, dares not presume to judge himself better than another, because he knoweth not how soon he may become worse.

A *fifth* Symptome is their feaverish paroxysms, with their intervals, which are constant in nothing but unconstancy: Their serving of God by fits, and for their own ends, hot in prosperity, but cold in adversity. These are those zelots which our blessed Saviour reproves in the parable, who are seemingly zealous

lous for the present, but in time of temptation fall away: like straw or stubble they give a great blaze for the present, but for want of proper nourishment go out in smoak, and smother.

The *sixth* and last Symptome, is their insensiblenes of their own condition, in their saying, they are well, when they are sick at heart; which is a certain forerunner and prognostick of death. They think themselves zealous enough, and say with those of *Laodicea*, *Rev.* 3. *I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing*, when Christ tells them that they *know not they are wretched, and poor, and blind, and naked, and miserable.* These are those that think themselves zealous enough, when they have no zeal at all; it being as impossible for true zeal to be confined within the narrow bounds of indifferency and live, as for fire to be shut up from air and not be extinguished.

These are the sad Symptoms, by which the distempered heats of false and counterfeit zeal (which cause sickness and death) may easily in the general be known and distinguished from that sound and Radical heat of true zeal, which causeth health and strength: It now remaineth for the farther and fuller discovery thereof, that I descend unto the particular kinds of it, that thou mayst thereby see the sinful and destructive nature of it, and thereby be the better able to avoid them. And these are principally three.

The first is hypocritical zeal, which wanting truth and syncerity, proposeth to it

self

ſelf ſiniſter and falſe ends.

The ſecond, blind zeal, which wanting knowledge and diſcretion taketh wrong ways.

The third, turbulent zeal, which wanting love, and humility, exceeds thoſe Chriſtian bounds of moderation which God hath ſet it.

The *firſt* of theſe is the mere mask of zeal, having only a form of godlineſs, but denying the power thereof; theſe are they that pretend God & his glory, but intend Satan and their own private ends: theſe are thoſe monſters of men, thoſe vileſt of Chriſtians, whoſe word is God and the Goſpel, but their project to devour widdows houſes, and Orphans eſtates; by their pretended righteouſneſs ſeeming to be more excellent than their neighbours, but by their intended villany proving themſelves worſe than thoſe that openly profeſs iniquity: theſe whited walls let every true *Nathaniel* be careful to avoid, as the very peſt of men, and ſcum of Chriſtians.

The *ſecond* is, that zeal which S. *Paul* beareth witneſs (*Rom.* 10.) *is not according to knowledge*, which is rather to be pittyed and directed, than contumeliouſly upbraided and reproved; although it may be juſtly feared that too many of them may be too guilty of ſelf conceitedneſs, in attributing more unto their own abilities, than they have either warrant for out of God's word to maintain, or worth in themſelves to challenge.

The

The *third* and last is turbulent zeal, which knows not how to keep it self within its bounds, the blessed limits of God's Sacred word, but too often is transported far beyond the holy bounds of Christian moderation: and this kind of zeal arising often from the weakness of reason, and the strength of passion, is sometimes found even in the chosen and elect vessels of Christ: This kind of zeal it was that our Saviour found in S. *Peter*, and sharply reproved (when he asked him leave to call for fire from heaven to destroy the *Jews*) to whom Christs answer was, *Get thee behind me Satan.* That zeal which is not bounded with Piety and mixed with Charity may well be suspected for false, sinful, and Diabolical.

The sad and woful effects of this last kind of zeal, have been too often seen in former ages and sadly felt in this we live in; hot and turbulent quarrels about trifles having wasted many famous Churches, and removed many glorious candlesticks both in the Eastern and Western parts: And unnatural quarrels and unchristian dissentions amongst our selves, about those few innocent Ceremonies, (which of themselves are matters indifferent, but by command of a lawful Authority become absolutely necessary) have made the glorious light of this Church of ours burn dim, and (without mercy) may in time put it quite out.

These are the sad and dangerous effects of false and counterfeit zeal, which thou hast seen in the several kinds of their distemper'd

heats; that thereby thou mayst more carefully avoid them. I am now come to shew thee the true Zealot, whose fervency is in the spirit, whose conversation in heaven, whose only aim and end syncerely, and intirely Gods glory, directed and guided by Gods word; whose holy fervency is pretious in Gods eye, and whose praise is not of men but of God.

The true Zealot is he, whose gratious heart, seriously considering of the stupendious and unutterable love of God in Christ Jesus unto him, is now (by Gods holy Spirit sweetly working in him) seriously and fully resolved to forsake this evil world, and wholly and sincerely to give himself up a living sacrifice to Christ and his service, and with ardency of love and fervency of affection to indeavour daily to promote his glory.

This is that holy fire, that both kindles his affections, and inflames his actions; that makes those happy souls that are acquainted with it, an holy people unto God, and zealous of good works; that makes them spiritual, as God is spiritual; that burns up all the hay and stubble, the dross and filth of their corrupt natures, and leaves nothing remaining, but what is suitable to its self. This was that holy fire, that made *David*'s heart wax hot within him, *Psal.* 39. 4. and so gratiously inflam'd the hearts of Gods elect in all ages of the world, that it cheerfully, and joyfully, and thankfully, carried them through the strongest of temptations, and fiercest of afflictions: and, which is the summe of all, this is that which eateth up Gods children, and makes

makes them of Terrestrial, Cœlestial, Angelical, Seraphical, of all the Divine graces approaching neareſt to the Divine Nature, from whoſe refulgent raies, his bleſſed Angels have both light and heat, whereby their glorious natures are inflam'd with holy ardency to love him, and joyfully and fervently to execute his holy will.

The lovelineſs and excellency of this heavenly grace may be the better ſeen, if we conſider it in the following particulars: Firſt, in its Original; Secondly, its nature; Thirdly, its object; and fourthly and laſtly, its effects.

Firſt, As to its Original; we find that to be of Divine extract, of God's own kindling, and for his own uſe (who is infinitely all Spirit) without which no ſacrifice can be accepted: And this we find typified unto us by that elementary fire under the law, which was never to go out; which rather than it ſhould be wanting (contrary to its nature) was ſent down from heaven, to conſume the legal ſacrifice: and thus alſo under the Goſpel, God ſendeth down his holy Spirit into the hearts of his Children, to raiſe their affections, and warm their devotions; and this is that holy zeal, which is ever aſcending and never aſcended to the higheſt; ſuch and ſo excellent is the ſublime nature of it: And thus we find the holy Ghoſt, *Act.* 2. 3. viſibly deſcending in the ſhape of fiery cloven tongues, and reſting on the heads of the Apoſtles, inviſibly inflaming their affections with ready alacrity and joyful fervency for Gods glory; from whence it was that they were burning in ſpi-

rit, fervent in prayer, thundering in preaching, ſhining in life, patient in tribulation, joyful in affliction, courteous in life, and triumphant in death.

The *ſecond* thing in conſideration, is the ſpiritual nature of it, by which it is ever mounting and aſcending to perfection; by which Divine and Spiritual Nature, it is unto the ſoul (as the ſoul unto the body) the very life and being of it, without which it is ſpiritually dead, and can no more ariſe from ſpiritual lukewarmneſs in the ſleep of ſin, than the natural body from the ſtate of forgetfulneſs in the ſleep of death: from whence it is that the carnal man is no more ſenſible of the comfortable warmth of this heavenly grace, than the inanimate body of the reviving and refreſhing heat of the riſing Sun. Can there be any thing more pretious than life? *Skin for skin and all that a man hath will he give for his life, Job* 2. 4. and is there any life ſo pretious as that which is immortal, either in a bleſſed or unhappy ſtate of being? And can we then without extream folly take ſo much ſinful care for this tranſitory life, and be ſo utterly neglective of our ſpiritual, which muſt remain for ever? In the name and fear of God, let this therefore timely teach us all, what zealous perſons we ought to be, who are to make our ſelves ſpiritually ready for Chriſts ſpiritual coming; that ſo we may be zealouſly amiable in his eyes who hath given us his love: how rich in graces, how burning in affections, how chaſte in deſires, how ſweet in perfumes of zealous ſupplications, how unſpotted of the world,

world, in holineſs and righteouſneſs, and how earneſt in our deſires for the ſweet injoyment of that bleſſed Spirit, by which we may become zealous upon earth and triumphant in heaven?

The *third* in conſideration is the high and ſupream excellency of its object Chriſt Jeſus, in whom are all the rich treaſures of wiſdom, knowledge, grace, and glory; *in whom* (that is, in whoſe perſon, as the ever bleſſed mediatour between God and man) *dwelleth the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*; and in whom as in the bleſſed fountain, is the perfection of all beauty: an object more tranſcendently amiable, and infinitely more to be deſired, than *Davids* thouſands of gold and ſilver, or *Pauls* far larger poſſeſſion of all theſe outward injoyments; the great beauty of this creation being but a dark ſhaddow of that incomprehenſible and infinitely far more excelling beauty of his glorious Eſſence, from whom are all the beauties and deſirable perfections of this preſent life; and unto whom (as to the vaſt Ocean from whence our Rivulets of comforts daily flow) ought inceſſantly to run the thankful currents of our praiſes here, of our Allelujaes hereafter. By this bleſſed Object it is, that the zealous Chriſtian can joyfully, and comfortably behold God (who is eſſentially love in his Eſſence, and communicably love unto us) affectionately imbracing him from all eternity, and (by his holy Spirit, (the happy means ordained to the bleſſed end, the ſaving of his pretious ſoul) inviting, intreating, perſwading, nay even com-

pelling him to come in to Christ this blessed object of eternal love, that his house of glory may be full. This is that soul satisfying object which so inflames the hearts of his elect with holy zeal, that they think no time too long, no pains to o great, no suffering too much for Christ and his service: from whence it is that the true zealots love to Christ, is not only great but passionate, as we have it, *Cant.* 7. 10. *I am my well beloved's and his desire is towards me*; and *Cant.* 5 8. *I am sick of love, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, and I shall be satisfied.* Let me, O blessed Jesus, injoy the sweet refreshments of thy blessed spirit in this life, and thy sweet imbraces of eternity in that to come.

The *Fourth* and last thing in consideration, whereby the loveliness and excellency of this heavenly Grace appeareth, is the blessed fruits and effects of it, which are so many, so wonderful, and of such high and saving concernment, that even the very least of them (unto a sincere heart) is an invitation sufficient to make him heartily in love with it. For by this blessed grace of zeal alone and only it is, that all the other gifts and graces of Gods holy spirit in us are made lively, active and acceptable in Gods eye; whereby we are at blessed peace with God and our own Souls. By holy Zeal it is that in Christ Jesus we have both free access unto the throne of Grace, and a comfortable return from it. *The prayers of the righteous* (saith the Apostle *Jam.* 5. 16.) *avail much, if they be fervent*; which are no more able to ascend thither without zeal, than vapor from a Still without

without fire. Zeal is that holy Varnish, that sets a luster upon the Soul, and makes it appear lovely in Christs eye; for by this alone it is, that we know our Faith in Christ to be living, our hope in him steadfast and strong, our love to him chast & true, our self-denial for him fixed & unfeigned, our peace that we injoy by him invaluable, our joy in the Holy Ghost unutterable, (by our godly perseverance in the zealous improvement of all these) our assurance of heaven unalterable. In brief, wouldst thou be a man after Gods own heart? there is nothing but zeal at the heart can make thee so. Wouldst thou be undaunted in spirit? zeal will make thee bold as a Lion; able to incounter the greatest of dangers, tribulations, afflictions, persecutions, even death it self for Christs sake: thy faith in his promises, thy hope in his mercy, thy love to his truth, thy patience under his trials, thy meekness and humility under his rod, and thy gracious perseverance in them all, all these by thy fervent zeal to his glory, coming forth of this fiery furnace of affliction, far more pretious than Gold that is tried in the fire, without the least stain of impurity, or loss of integrity. Wouldst thou be more excellent than thy neighbour, all the righteous ones are the excellent of the Earth, and the zealot surmounts them all, as *Saul* did the people by the head and shoulders. And last of all, which is the chief of all, Wouldst thou have power with God in Praier to overcome him? to obstruct his Justice, to reconcile his mercy, to obtain his blessings, to divert his judgements, and to pacify his wrath?

All this can holy zeal inable thee to do: as to thy comfort thou maiest see in holy *Jacob* zealously praying and powerfully prevailing; *Elias* zealously praying, and fetching down fire from Heaven to consume the sacrifice, and water to refresh the Earth; *Aaron* with his incense (the holy type of burning zeal) standing between the living and the dead, and ceasing the Plague, *Numb.* 16. 47. *Mary* the sinner obtaining pardon for her sins, because she was zealous and loved much; and the zealous Saints, whose fervent love to Christ carried them through fiery flames to heavenly glory, arraied there with robes of glory suitable to their degrees of zeal on Earth.

These are the blessed and the glorious effects of zeal, manifested in the Souls of true zealots: there are others yet remaining that extend themselves even to their bodies and estates also. And thus we have one *Moses* zealously contending with God in Prayer for the *Israelits*, until at last God said unto him, *Let me alone*: here *Israels* destruction was diverted by his zealous supplication: And thus we have one *Elisha*, the Horsemen and the Chariots of *Israel*: And thus we have a zealous *Phineas*, by his executing punishment upon the sinful *Zimri* and *Cosbi* in the act of fornication, obtaining a blessing for himself and his posterity, even throughout all their generations; as we have it *Numb.* 25. 7. One of these zealots, although never so much despised in the worlds eye, is worth a thousand others, and shall be called a Prince with God (as *Israel* was;) when the luke-warm ones of

of the world (be they never so worldly rich) shall be looked on as beggars, as being in Gods esteem both poor, and naked, and wretched, and miserable, as we have it *Rev.* 3. 17. Yea such and so excellent are the effects thereof, that it affordeth warmth not only to those that are near it, but even unto those also that are strangers to it: so fared it with the Israelite, with whom the Levite dwelt; and with the widdow of *Sarepta*, with whom the Prophet lodged.

Is it not a wonder now, that this holy fire should be so great a stranger to the world as to be so much slighted by some, derided by others, esteemed by few, and disrespected almost by all? Nay is it not yet a greater wonder, that it should be so great a stranger unto those who are not of the world, but have given up their names unto Christ, and pretend themselves Citizens of the new *Jerusalem* in Heaven, and members of the houshold of faith upon earth? of whom it may be as truly said as of the pretenders to righteousness; *There is none zealous, no not one.* O let it not be so with thee that readest this, but labour earnestly to obtain and preserve it. For thy holy assistance wherein, that thou maist feel the comfortable warmth of it, and so be heartily in love with it, make use of these my concluding directions.

In order to the obtaining of it, let thy heart be first made ready to receive it. If thou findest there any noisome damps of sin, remove them thence by true and timely repentance: for where the hearth is damp, the fire will be both

longer in kindling, and backwarder in burning.

When thy heart is thus prepared, lift it up to God in prayer for obtaining of it: Never (O never) give thy soul rest, nor thy devotions rest, until thou hast a comfortable feeling of the warmth of it: let him not alone, let him not goe, until thou hast prevailed, until thou feelest the blessed heat of it in thine affections, and the holy effects of this happy heat, in thy zealous life and conversation. If thou entrest upon this holy work with hungering and thirsting for this heavenly grace, thou needest not to fear the sweet injoyment of it; thy God who much delighteth in thee to do thee good, will never stint thee in thy good desires; his love is ever more ready to give, than thy want to receive. Let thy prayers therefore he faithful and earnest, and thou canst not want the blessing.

When thou hast obtained this blessing, thy next care must be to preserve and increase it; which that thou mayst the better do observe these three directions. *First*, Let this holy fire be daily fomented with convenient air; *Secondly*, Let it be duly fed with such proportionable fuel as may nourish and increase it; *Thirdly*, Let all impediments be removed that may either damp, or quite extinguish it.

That Spiritual air by which this spiritual fire must live, is the comfortable breathing of Gods holy Spirit in thy heart: Thy first and greatest care therefore ought to be that thou quench not the holy Spirit, by the sinful deeds of the flesh. Pray therefore often, and earnestly

neſtly unto God that thou maieſt be filled with the Spirit, that ſo thy zeal may live and thy ſins dye. Thy ſpiritual fuel to nourish and increaſe it, is Gods ſacred word, and therein his gratious promiſes and never failing performances; theſe are the proper fuel for it, and his Preachers lips the beſt bellowes to blow it up; that will aſſuredly preſerve and increaſe it, and this will give more light and heat unto it. The impediments to be removed are the bent of thy affections to the world ward, and the ſuddain damps ariſing from the filth of ſin; the firſt will much allay the heat and vigour of it, and the ſecond quite put it out: the adventitious heat of thy inflamed affections to the world ward, will much abate thy natural heat of zeal to Chriſt and his kingdome; and the cold damp of any boſome ſin, will quite extinguiſh grace and goodneſs in thee. The Ark of God and *Dagon*, God and *Belial* zeal and ſin, cannot live together. Theſe are the holy meanes to obtain, nouriſh, and preſerve this heavenly grace; the rich poſſeſſion whereof will both increaſe thy graces on earth, and thy glory in heaven.

PIOUS ADMONITIONS

Upon the preceding Meditations.

AND now beloved Christian (I having shewed thee the nature use and excellency of zeal) If thou desirest the continuance of grace in thy heart, of peace in thy conscience, of joy in thy spirit, of protection to thy body, of safety to thy soul, and a blessing on thy estate and thy childrens after thee; If thou desirest to be heard when thou prayest, and to receive what thou prayest for; If thou wouldst have an honorable esteem in Gods eye, and have spiritual power to prevail with him for obtaining of mercies, removing of judgements, the forgiveness of sins, the increase of grace, and augmentation of glory: Let what thou hast here read admonish thee to hear in time what the Spirit of God saith unto thee, and to be zealous. O let me beg of thee as thou lovest thy soul, to use all means possible for the gracious improvement of it: Let not the scoffs and derisions of the *Michals* of this world, deterr thee from it; but comfort thy self in this, that when thou art vilest and most despicable in the worlds eye, thou art most pretious in the sight of God; but say rather with holy *David*, *If this be vileness I will yet become more vile*; & with holy *Joshuah*, 24. 15. let others doe what they will, but *I and my house will serve the* Lord, and be zealous.

O

O remember, I beseech thee, that thou art not of the world, but one of God's peculiar people; one of that holy seed, and spiritual generation, whose names are inrolled in heaven, even in Christ Jesus, who is the ever blessed book of life, and that therefore thou oughtest to be the more peculiarly zealous of his glory: Let this therefore earnestly perswade with thee, to deal truly with thine own soul, in searching narrowly for sin, and suing humbly, and timely, and earnestly for pardon, in nourishing and cherishing this holy grace by all the holy helps conducing to it: pray, read, meditate, frequent the publick places of Gods worship: let the blessed examples of the zealous Saints incourage thee; and rather than be wanting of the use of means to excite thee to the practice & improvement of this heavenly grace, let the carelesness, and coldness of this present age and time wherein thou livest, incourage thee, that thou mayst thereby shew thy self a peculiar seed, and blessed child of God, even in the midst of a crooked, perverse, luke-warm, and sinful generation. Thou knowest not how soon (for the loathed sin of luke-warmness) the glorious light of the Gospel (as from other nations it hath been) may be removed from thee. Thou knowest not how suddenly by death thou mayst be remov'd from it; whether this very day it may not be said unto thee, as unto him in the Gospel, *Luke* 16. 2. *give an account of thy stewardship, for thou shalt be no longer steward.* Improve therefore timely and daily this thy heavenly talent: Repent and be a faithful, sincere, and zealous Christian.

THE

THE PRAYER.

O *Thou great, glorious, and eternal Being, who art that inacceſſible light and heat, from whence the bleſſed Angels do receive that bleſſed warmth, whereby their holy natures are inflam'd with fervency of zealous love to thee and thy commands; from whoſe eternal love in Chriſt to thine elect, I live, and move, and have my ſpiritual Being: vouchſafe, I humbly pray thee, that by the bleſſed rays of this thy Divine love, my ſinful ſoul may be inlightened with the ſaving knowledge of thy truth: O let theſe comfortable beams of Chriſt the Son of righteouſneſs, revive and warm my frozen and benummed affections; that they may zealouſly break forth into a bright and fervent flame of affection to thee and thy glory: O quicken and increaſe this holy grace every day more and more in me; and ſo nouriſh and foment it by the bleſſed breathings of thy holy Spirit, that I may truly know thee, ſincerely love thee, joyfully ſerve thee, and conſtantly delight in thee. O let me never think my ſelf zealous enough, but daily endeavour to increaſe this holy flame to that happy heighth, that may at laſt eat up and utterly conſume the filthy ſtraw and ſtubble of my ſinful and corrupt nature; and leave me truly ſuch as thou wouldſt have me to be, thy holy and peculiar ſpiritual ſeed, thy willing and obedient Child, zealouſly, and faithfully, and conſtantly, and joyfully, and intirely devoted unto thee, and thy glory. Grant this, dear*

Father,

Father, for his bleſſed ſake, who freely and zealouſly laid down his pretious life for me, even Jeſus Chriſt the righteous. Amen.

CHAP. XV.

Of the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of life, the terrours and amazements of an unprepared death, and the ſeverity and eternity of puniſhments after death.

CONſider, O vain man, whoſoever thou art that yet dareſt to go on boldly, and preſumptuouſly, in any known and boſome ſin: O conſider, I beſeech thee, both ſeriouſly, and timely, that thy days, thy hours, nay even thy very minutes perhaps, are ſwift, ſhort, and uncertain, and may ſuddenly be brought to an end; that to day thou art here, and to morrow thou mayſt be gone; that as the graſs of the field, thou art ſoon cut down and withered, and thy place no more to be found; that even this thy ſhort moment of time is wholly in Gods hands, to order it and diſpoſe of it as it ſeemeth beſt unto his godly wiſdom; that it is not given but lent unto thee, and that thou canſt not therefore claim one minute of it as thine own; that this thy pretious lent time, muſt ſhortly (perhaps ſuddenly) be no more, but be ſwallowed up into the vaſt Ocean of Eternity; that after this life there is no place left for repentance, although thou

ſeekeſt

ſeekeſt it with tears; that judgment once pronounced againſt thee can never be revoked; that thy woeful miſery can never be relieved; and (to the terrour of thy ſoul) that this thy woeful calamity ſhall never be ended; for as the tree falleth, ſo it muſt lie for ever. And then judge how great will be thy folly, how woeful thy miſery, if thy only aim and end be ſtill to miſpend it; if thou vainly promiſeſt unto thy ſelf both months and years of ſinful delights. Thou readeſt but of one, in all the book of God, that durſt preſume to meaſure out his life by years; he by God himſelf *Luke* 12. was branded with the name of *fool*: O let his folly be thy inſtruction, to account each day thy laſt, becauſe thou knoweſt not whether that days light may be allowed thee, to lead thee to the next: even this very night, for ought thou knoweſt, thy ſoul (as his) may be required of thee; and then where are all thoſe tranſitory ſinful joys, thoſe falſe delights, thoſe thorns and briars of this ſinful world, that have both choaked the good ſeed of Gods grace ſown in thy heart, pricked thy conſcience, and wounded thee in ſpirit? The ſad remembrance of them will be then moſt grievous unto thee, the burden of them intollerable, and, with amazement of ſoul and terrour of conſcience, thou wilt then be forced to confeſs, and ſay, I have ſlept out my ſleep of ſin, and found nothing in my hands but miſery to afflict me, and ſhame to confound me.

Conſider in the next place (while thou haſt yet time of grace to conſider) what dreadful thoughts,

thoughts, what horrour of conscience, what anguish of spirit, and what unutterable distraction of mind, at this unwelcome hour of death must needs surprize thy unprepared soul: when these thy present pains of death, are but the sad forerunners of those far greater future pains of hell, which must remain for ever; when the pleasure of thy sins is now past and gone, and their guilt only remaining; when thy conscience is now thorowly awakened to accuse thee, Gods justice ready to condemn thee, the viols of his fiercest wrath to be poured out upon thee, all the miserable comforters of this life to forsake thee, and the Devil, thy seducing enemy, now ready to receive thee. What wouldst thou not now give (if millions of vain worlds were thine to give) to be one of those blessed ones, whose godly wisdom thou hast formerly accounted foolishness? how willingly wouldest thou now promise, upon Gods reprieve, utterly to forsake all the sinful pleasures of the wicked, that thou mayst thereby die the death of the righteous, that so thy future condition may be like unto his? O wretched man that thou art! canst thou consider this, and not bitterly bewail thy former folly, and not suddenly resolve to break off from thy ungodly courses, and make sure work for thy soul? Thou hast now (in this thy day of grace) free leave to obtain that, which then is utterly impossible for thee, at any rate, to purchase: thou art now invited, intreated, beseeched, even compelled to come in to Christ, by the frequent visits of Gods holy Spirit, by the forewarnings of his Prophets,

by

by the beſeechings of his Apoſtles, by his mercies to allure thee, and his judgments to inforce thee, and (which is yet of higher conſequence) by the holy interceſſion of his bleſſed Son unto the Father for thee. If notwithſtanding all this, thou ſhalt ſtill careleſly refuſe to make thy calling and election ſure, thou canſt then expect none other at thy laſt hour, but that fearful expectation of judgement, which is the portion of all thoſe hypocrites, which wilfully, and obſtinately, and daringly, forget God.

Conſider yet farther of the dreadful horrour of this thy ſeparation: Thou art now going into that unknown place, where thy diſtreſſed ſoul muſt be eternally unhappy, and without reſt, becauſe eternally removed from God, the true and proper center of her reſt and quietneſs. This is that *Pœna Damni*, that puniſhment of loſs, that eternal baniſhment of unhappy ſouls, from Gods preſence, with which the evil ſpirits and the rebellious reprobates are everlaſtingly tormented; where no eye ſhall pitty them, no heart relent for them, no hand of mercy and compaſſion be afforded to relieve them, and (to augment their grief) where God himſelf, who only can releaſe them, ſhall for ever not only hide his bowels of compaſſion from them, but (as the Prophets phraſe is) ſhall alſo *laugh at their deſtruction.*

O moſt woeful and deplorable condition of the damned! who not only ſuffer this great or rather greateſt puniſhment of loſs, but even that of ſenſe alſo; even that ſpiritual tormenting

ing fire, prepared of old for thoſe that are the children of diſobedience, and which ſhall never be extinguiſhed. God whom they have offended is eternal, therefore muſt their puniſhment be eternal; he is alſo infinite, therefore muſt their ſuffering alſo be infinite: Nothing but an infinite ſatisfaction in Chriſt could reconcile his mercy unto ſinners, and therefore nothing but an infinite puniſhment can be proportionable to his infinite Juſtice: Infinite in continuance, infinite without intermiſſion, infinite without the leaſt mitigation; not ſo little a refreſhment as one drop of mercy may here be had for the relief of miſery; from the eternity of which extream miſery ariſeth that extremity of anguiſh, which is neither poſſible for me to utter, nor for thee to conceive.

From the ſad apprehenſion of this their moſt deplorable condition, was that moſt dreadful ſaying of S. *Paul*, *Heb.* 10. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*: fearful to the ſoul at its departure from the body; fearful to the body at its being reunited to the ſoul, and eternally fearful unto both, who as they were formerly ſharers in ſinning, muſt now alſo be eternal ſharers in ſuffering; where they ſhall lamentably cry and not be heard, beg for help, and not be relieved, mourn and not be comforted.

Who can now enough admire the folly of thoſe deluded ſouls, that have now mercy freely offered them, and yet wilfully and wickedly refuſe it? that have now their day of grace to repent in, and yet wretchedly miſ-

mispend it? that make a mock at sin and laughing stock of punishment? that are sinfully mindful of Gods mercy, and utterly forgetful of his Justice? that can readily remember that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, but are too apt to forget, that it is unto those only who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit? that, as the Apostles phrase is, both daily and hourly treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgement? that are so sinfully far from true and timely repentance, that (as the Prophets phrase is) they *draw on iniquity with cart-ropes*, they even tempt their temptations, by making provision for the flesh to fulfil the sinful lusts thereof? Who can sufficiently bewail this their unhappy condition, when (by their long and stubborn resisting of the holy Spirit) their blessed time of calling is once past? when (as the Prophets phrase is) they have not only wearied out themselves, but their God also, in their ways of wickedness, and are now left to the wickedness of their own ways, that they may thereby fill up the measure of their iniquities here, that God (in his Divine Justice) may reward them with the full measure of his wrath hereafter.

Be warned therefore in time (I beseech thee) to consider gratiously, and seriously, of the great danger thou art in, by living and delighting in sin, and of that greater danger thou art hasting to, by thy being utterly depriv'd of grace: And if thou either desirest to enjoy the love and favour of God in Christ Jesus, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom, know-

knowledge, grace and glory, in whom is peace unalterable, joy unutterable, and bleſſedneſs inconceivable: If thou valueſt the bleſſed guard of Gods holy Angels about thee, the bleſſed working of all things together to the beſt for thee; If thou deſireſt a ſafe, ſweet and comfortable life, a bleſſed and a welcome death, a joyful reſurrection and a bleſſed poſſeſſion of that eternal inheritance which Chriſt thy bleſſed redeemer hath purchaſed for thee, where all tears ſhall be wiped from thine eyes, all ſorrow from thine heart, where everlaſting joy ſhall be upon thy head, and where thou ſhalt poſſeſs joy and exultation; ſet not light by what thou haſt here read, but make a timely and a gratious improvement of it, and the Lord in his rich mercy and abundant goodneſs towards thee, ſo bleſs it unto thee, that thou mayſt ſee in this thy day, thoſe things that are belonging to thy peace, that ſo thou mayſt repent and be ſaved.

THE

THE PRAYER.

BLessed Lord God, when I seriously consider of thy Purity, and holiness, and of my own vileness, and deformity, of thy stupendious love in Christ, and mine own unthankfulness, of thy tender bowels of compassion towards me, and of my rebellious heart and stubborn provocations against thee, I am utterly confounded and ashamed to lift up mine eyes unto heavens to beg my pardon of thee: Lord I have grievously sinned, and now I heartily desire to repent; I have sinned against thee, and I cannot repent but by thee; I have lain long dead and stinking in the rotten grave of sin, and cannot rise from thence unless thou calleſt me aloud by the great miracle of thy rich mercy to come forth: I have sinned by delight in sinful thoughts, in ungratious consenting to them, in more sinful acting of them, and in most presumptuous customary continuance in them; and (which is yet a farther and more wicked aggravation of my guilt) by my boasting of them and my glorying in them,

them, and in all this against the light of mine own knowledge, the checks of mine own conscience, and the blessed motions of thy ever blessed Spirit, without the least remorse of conscience, or purpose of repentance: O let it be enough, Lord, for it is enough, yea too too much, that I have thus long wandred in the waies of wickedness; O let me now see and faithfully believe, that there is no sweetness but in goodness, no beauty but in holiness, no pleasure but in thy spiritual refreshments, no safety but in thy protection, no comfort but in thy grace, no rest and quietness, but in the blessed peace of conscience here, and full assurance of a blessed condition hereafter: O teach me now at last so to number my daies, that I may apply my heart to the saving knowledge of thee and thy Christ, which is the only true wisdom; let me never think it well with me until I can truly say with comfort, Lord I believe, *and then for thy rich mercy sake in Christ,* help thou my unbelief: *Lord, fit and prepare me for the hour of death and day of judgement: O thou blessed Saviour of lost man, who hast sweetned death by thy perfect Obedience, and perfumed the grave by thy willing suffering; suffer me not in my last*

last hour for any paines of Death, terrours of conscience, or horrors of Hell, to fall from my fast hold of thy mercy, nor to lose the blessed hopes of mine eternal inheritance; but in my last, and greatest weakness, and extremity, even then, O Lord, when all the comforts of this wretched life shall fail me, Lord Jesus forsake me not, be not thou then far from me. Lord hear me, and help me, and have mercy on me, in the free pardon and forgiveness of my many and my great offences, strengthen my weak and staggering faith, perfect that good work which thou hast gratiously begun in me, to thy glory and mine own endless comfort; and all for Christ Jesus sake the righteous. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Containing heavenly helps for weak, doubting and diſconſolate Chriſtians.

AND now my dear Chriſtian convert, as the bleſſed cloſe of all, I have here provided for thee ſuch ſpiritual comfort and aſſiſtance, as by Gods bleſſing upon it, may both ſufficiently inable thee to withſtand all thoſe ſinful Soul diſmaying arguments and objections which either Satan, or thine own accuſing conſcience ſhall object againſt thee, and alſo ſo nouriſh and increaſe thy ſpiritual ſtrength, that thou mayſt thereby be able to put on that whole armour of God, which will make thee both a compleat Chriſtian Souldier, to fight the Lords battails, and alſo a bleſſed and glorious Victor over thy ſpiritual enemies; ſo that at the laſt when thou art ready to lay down thine earthly Tabernacle, thou maiſt with comfort ſay with holy *Paul* 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. *I know that when the houſe of this earthly tabernacle is diſſolved, I have a building given of God, an houſe not made with hands, Eternal in the Heavens*: for I know whom I have believed and am perſwaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him againſt that day, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. For the bleſſed enjoyment whereof, make uſe with me I pray thee of theſe enſuing helps; and the Lord (in his rich

mercy) so bless them unto thee, that in the hour of temptation, thou maist gather spiritual strength, and Christian courage by them, to resist the powerful onsets of thy spiritual enemy, and increase daily in all godliness and honesty, and thereby in joy and comfort in the Holy Ghost; that so thou maist have that inviolable peace with thy God which passeth understanding, peace with thine own conscience, and at last that blessed and eternal peace, prepared for thee by the Prince of peace, the Lord Jesus thy redeemer, to whom with the Father and the holy spirit the blessed and eternal comforter, be glory for ever. Amen.

As our main business in this life is to be in Christ, so our greatest comfort or unhappiness consisteth in the strength or weakness of this our Christian assurance, whereby it is plainly evidenced to us whether we be in Christ or not. For if we by a true, living, and justifying Faith cannot lay hold upon him as our Christ, *we* certainly *are* (as S. *Paul* saith) *of all men most miserable.* Now in so much as even the very best of Christians sometimes (but more frequently such as are newly converted) and yet weak in the Faith) are by the power and malice of the Devil (who dayly seeketh whom he may devour,) tempted with sinful doubtings of the safety of their condition; I have therefore in the last place (for the comfort and safety of those that are passed from death to life, from the cruel bondage of Satan into the glorious liberty of the sons of God) indeavoured to lay down by way of Objections, and Answers, some of those principal

cipal ſcruples of conſcience and doubtings of heart which (either by the winnowings of Satan, or the weakneſs of Faith) may indanger our ſpiritual building on our bleſſed foundation Chriſt Jeſus; and give us ſeemingly juſt cauſe to fear whether we are in Chriſt or not.

Object. 1. I fear exceedingly that I know not Chriſt ſavingly, that I have not thoroughly (as the Apoſtle bids us mee *Gal.* 6.) proved my ſelf whether I am in the Faith; that my graces are not ſaving, but common graces, which have only the reſemblance of graces but not their powers and effects, whereby I am only outwardly adorned but not inwardly ſanctified: So that I may well fear my ſelf to be one of thoſe that the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of, *Gal.* 6. 3. That think my ſelf ſomething when I am (indeed) nothing, but deceive my ſelf with mine own vain imaginations.

Anſwer. When this or the like doubts ſhall moleſt thee, comfort thy ſelf with this, that although through the weakneſs of thy Faith thou canſt not believe as thou wouldeſt, yet thou earneſtly deſireſt to believe and grieveſt that thou canſt believe no more, and canſt with earneſtneſs of ſoul with him in the Goſpel ſay, *Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief*: That thou willingly deſireſt to forgoe all to injoy Chriſt: That unleſs thou hadſt ſome heavenly ſparks of this holy fire of Faith in thine heart, thy Flax could not ſmoke with theſe holy deſires, and that therefore undoubtedly Gods gracious promiſe of not quenching it, *Mat.*

12.20. belongeth unto thee, and that although the earthy dampneſs of thy corruptions yet hinders thy happy flaming out into a more bleſſed light and heat of Faith, yet by the ſorrowful groans of thy perplexed ſpirit that thou ſtill ſmoakeſt more and more with holy deſires, although thou canſt not yet flame out with heavenly comfort: That God looks not yet upon thee as a Tree but as a reed, weak in thy infancy of Faith, and bruiſed with continual mourning for thy ſins, and that therefore he expecteth not yet more from thee than thou art able to perform, neither will (in mercy) lay more upon thee for the trial of thy Faith than thy preſent weakneſs by his grace aſſiſting ſhall inable thee to bear.

Object. 2. If Satan ſhall object againſt thee that thy repentance is not true, becauſe although thou haſt mourned for thy ſins, ſighed and groaned under them, confeſſed them to Almighty God and prayed for forgiveneſs of them, made ſerious promiſes and ſolemn vowes to forſake them, made oftentimes reſiſtance againſt them with holy reſolution never more to be overcome by them; yet that it is clearly evident that all this proceded more from the conviction of thy conſcience being affrighted with the fear of puniſhment than from grief of heart for offending of thy good and gracious father, becauſe thou ſtill beareſt a love unto them and delighteſt in the remembrance of them.

Anſwer. Comfort thy ſelf in this, that there are ſtill remaining in the hearts of the moſt regenerate

generate men alive, some seeds of natural corruptions, which God in his divine wisdom suffers there to remain, partly to humble us, lest we should be exalted above measure, and partly to let us know, that our salvation is wholly of grace, and not of works; from whence is that lusting *of the flesh against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh*, even in the elect of God; of which Saint *Paul* speaketh *Gal.* 5. 17. and from hence was that *Law of the members rebelling against the law of the mind*, which S. *Paul* found in himself, *Rom.* 7. So that although by the frailty and corruption of nature, thou maist have some suddain Eruptions of sinful thoughts, some pleasurable remembrance of thy former sins; yet by the goodness of Gods restraining grace, thou canst say with *Paul*, *It is not I* (the regenerate man) *but sin that dwelleth in me*; and with *Joseph* also, *How shall I doe this great wickedness and so sin against my God.* When thou hast thus thoroughly washed thine heart from wickedness, as thy God by his holy prophet *Jeremiah* requireth of thee; when grace is thus above nature (although sometimes a wicked thought may surprise thee) I dare boldly pronounce thy repentance true, thy condition safe and thee happy.

Object. 3. If Satan and thine own accusing conscience shall yet farther object, that thou hast not only had a love unto thy sins, but that thou hast also strong lusts still remaining in thee, and hast relapsed into former Sins, notwithstanding all thy vowes and promises to God for ever to forsake them; by which it

plainly may appear unto thee, that thou art ſtill the very ſame thou wert before; whereas the Apoſtle tells thee, Acts 14. 9. that *faith purifieth the heart*; and further, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. that *if any be in chriſt he is become a new creature*: and farther yet *Gal.* 5. 24. that *they who are Chriſts have crucified the fleſh with the luſts thereof*: and that therefore thou vainly deceiveſt thy ſelf, and haſt no part nor portion in him.

Anſwer. In this ſore and dangerous temptations (maugre all the malice of Satan againſt thee) thou haſt yet matter of great comfort to uphold thee; *Firſt* in this that it is the ſad condition even of the very deareſt of Gods children to have their old ſins ſtill in part remaining in them; although in ſome far more than in others; proceding partly from Satans temptations, and partly from original corruptions: So that there remaineth not only a woful neceſſity (even in the very beſt) of committing ſins of frailty and infirmity, but even a dreadful poſſibility of falling into thoſe of wilfulneſs and preſumption, as was too ſadly experienced by *Noah*, *David*, *Peter*, and ſome others, choiſe and ſelect veſſels of Chriſt. The ſpouſe of Chriſt as we have it *Cant.* 5. although ſhe appear comely in the beauty of Chriſt, yet ſhe is black by her natural corruptions: This made *Paul* cry out *Rom.* 8. of his body of Death, and yet rejoyce in his deliverance by Chriſt the purchaſer and giver of life: ſo that if God ſhall ſtrictly mark what even the very beſt of us ſhall do amiſs, who is able to abide it? ſeeing as *David* ſaith *Pſal.* 130. 3. *In many things*

things we ſin all: but the comfortable difference to the child of God is this that his ſins are not lords (as in the wicked) to rule and reign over him, but ſervants to obey him. *Secondly*, Comfort thy ſelfe in this; That theſe thy ſinful and corrupt affections are by Gods divine wiſdome and his fatherly goodneſs towards thee, left in thee for thy great advantage. *Firſt* to humble thee, that as S. *Paul* ſaith *Rom.* 7. 25. thou maiſt be found in him not having thine own righteouſneſs but the righteouſneſs of Faith: *Secondly*, to increaſe thee in grace, that where ſin hath abounded as S. *Paul* ſaith *Rom.* 5. 20. there grace may abound much more, that ſo all things even thy very ſins may work to thine advantage, as the Apoſtle promiſeth *Rom.* 8. 28. And *thirdly*, to increaſe thee in glory; for as grace increaſeth here ſo ſhall glory hereafter. Be therefore comforted under this thy relapſe in this; that it is one thing for thee to be in ſin, and anothing for ſin to be in thee: They that are in ſin are the ſervants of ſin, but if ſin be only ſo in thee that thou obey it not in the luſts thereof, but when thou art faln riſeſt again by repentance, art a perfect hater of it, truly humbled for it, and fighteſt powerfully againſt it; from this thy ſin the Son of Righteouſneſs ſhall make thee free, ſo that it ſhall never be imputed to thee, either by way of guilt here, or puniſhment hereafter; the Lord in his rich mercy looking not ſo much upon thee as thou art, but as thou wouldſt be, who graciouſly meaſures us not by our actions ſo much as by our affections.

Object. 4. But this Relapse of thine is into a gross and hainous offence, a conscience wasting, Soul condemning sin, not fitting to be once named amongst the Saints; and although *David* and *Peter* were guilty of as great, yet after their Repentance they relapsed not again and again into the same sins as thou hast done; and that therefore seeing God and Belial cannot dwell together, thou hast just cause to fear that Christ is none of thine, but as thou hast made thy self the son of Rebellion, so it is most just with God to cast thee off as a reprobate, and the child of perdition.

Answer. Very rarely indeed doth the Lord leave his children thus dangerously to fall, but yet far be it from sinful flesh and blood, and much farther from the elect of God (although relapsed into great and grievous sins) to limit the holy one of *Israel*; whose rich and stupendious mercy is above all his works, but infinitely more above mans sinfulest actions; who as Saint *Paul* tells thee *Rom.* 9. 18. *will have mercy one whom he will have mercy*; who himself tells thee by his Prophet *Ezekiel*, 33. that he willeth not the death of any that is wicked, but that he be converted from his wicked ways, and live: Comfort thy self therefore in this and rest quiet in thy conscience with it, that there is no sin whatsoever committed, of whatsoever nature, quality, degree, or continuance it be (excepting only that dreadful sin against the Holy Ghost) but upon true and timely repentance of it, Godly sorrow for it, and a sanctified life after it, both may and shall be forgiven: thou hast

haſt the gratious promiſe of thy bleſſed Saviour for it, *Luke* 12. 31, 32. *All ſins that are committed ſhall be forgiven unto the ſons of men, but the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſhall never be forgiven.* Here is no time, no place, no perſon, no continuance, no quality, no degree of ſin or ſinner whatſoever excepted (ſave only that which (againſt the light of knowledge) is guilty of deſpight and malice againſt Chriſt and his Goſpel, with malicious perſeverance in the ſame) but all ſhall freely be forgiven. O the wonderful and ſtupendious mercy of a loving Redeemer! who can ſufficiently admire his gratious goodneſs unto us ſinners, who before we ask is thus ready to promiſe us our pardon? How canſt thou doubt of the truth of his promiſe who is truth it ſelf? how canſt thou queſtion his power to perform it, who is God Almighty? who can queſtion his readineſs to do it who is love it ſelf? O let this bleſſed conſideration melt thine eyes into tears, and thy heart into grief for grieving him who is thus compaſſionately affectionate towards thee: And let thy conſcience be quieted with this as a moſt certain truth, That although Chriſt and ſin allowed and cheriſhed cannot dwell together; yet Chriſt and ſin truly mourned for, even the gates of Hell it ſelf ſhall never be able to put aſunder: for of this thou maieſt with confidence and true comfort aſſure thy Soul that grace is as truly grace, although in a much lower degree, in oppoſing, as in overcoming thy corruptions.

Object. 5. If after all this, either the devil or thy conscience shall object, that notwithstanding all thy mourning for sin, yet thou findest not that spiritual comfort, that joy unspeakable and glorious, which the Saints possess; from whence ariseth their invaluable peace which passeth understanding; but thou hast daily fightings and warrings in thy soul, many doubtings in thy heart, whereas the Apostle saith, *Rom.* 5. 1. *Being justified by faith we have peace with God*; and that therefore thou doubtest much whether thy repentance be true, thy faith living, thy condition safe.

Answ. Spiritual joy and comfort in the holy Ghost is not always allowed to the Saints. Holy *David* himself complained of the want of it, even after his repentance, when he cryed out in the bitterness of his soul, *Psal.* 77. 7, 9, 10. *Will the Lord absent himself for ever, and will he shew no more favour? hath God forgotten to be gracious, and will he shut up his tender mercy in displeasure?* Yet even in a breath he comfortably recalleth this his distrust, in these his hopeful expressions; *And I said, this is my death, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most high*: Now and then a taste of this heavenly joy may suffice to let us know, that our faith is living, and that if we patiently wait upon the Lords leasure as *David* did, he will in his good time more abundantly comfort our hearts. God usually then sendeth his children most comfort when they stand in most need of it: When *Mary* thought she had quite lost her Lord and Saviour, then was Christs time to appear unto her: God thinketh it fit

to

to give thee but a taſte of that on earth, of which he hath prepared full draughts for thee in heaven: If thou makeſt ſpiritual joy and comfort the foundation of thy faith, thou buildeſt on uncertain ground; for heavenly comfort is not of the Eſſence of Faith, but an inchoation and degree of glory. Comfort thy ſelf therefore in this, that although thou wanteſt preſent comfort, yet thou wanteſt not faith: nay, thou mayſt aſſure thy ſoul, that is the ſtrongeſt faith, that can believe without comfort: *Though the Lord kill me,* ſaith *Job, yet will I truſt in him:* O therefore in the midſt of all this thy diſcomfort, ſay thou with holy *David, Pſal.* 42. 11. *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted within me? ſtill truſt in God, for he is the help of thy countenance and thy God.*

Object 6. But I fear I have not made my calling and Election ſure, becauſe I have ſo many ſtrong temptations upon me which often over-power me: I fear I am but an hypocrite, becauſe upon every good action done I am too apt to reflect upon my ſelf in mine own worthine's, and thereby to rob God of his glory and my ſelf of my heavenly reward; my thoughts are often times blaſphemous, ſo ſtrongly fulminated by the power of Satan, that I cannot reſiſt them; whereas if I had that bleſſed ſhield of faith which belongeth unto thoſe that are in Chriſt, I ſhould undoubtedly thereby be able to oppoſe theſe ſtrong aſſaults, to quench theſe fiery darts, which more moleſt me now, than before my repentance and converſion; ſo that I much

fear I am still out of Christ; and thereby cannot possibly have peace with God.

Answ. The best of men may be tempted to the worst of sins, and yet may still be dear and pretious in the sight of God: *Job* was strongly tempted to deny God: *Paul* to indulge the flesh; and Christ himself to fall down and worship the Devil: yet Divine grace was sufficient for them all. Be therefore comforted under these thy temptations, for God is most certainly at peace with thee, although thou canst not at all times plainly discern it; & thy faith is then as truly saving Faith when it is weak, as when it is strong: *Peter* thorough the weakness of his faith cryed out, *Master save me, I perish*: and Christ checks him, for weakness, but not for want of faith: *O thou of little faith*, (not O thou unbeliever) *wherefore didst thou doubt?* *Matth.* 14. 31. He that left thee his peace, told thee not thou shouldest have peace with Satan and thine own corruptions: the Devil formerly was at quiet with thee, or rather quietly within thee, because he was in full possession of thee; it is therefore now the stronger argument of thy deliverance from bondage, and of thy glorious liberty amongst the Sons of God, that thou art thus powerfully assaulted by him. Comfort thy self therefore in this, that these winnowings of Satan are touchstones of faith: If thou hadst never doubted, thou mightest then well have feared thou hadst never believed: But now seeing infidelity and faith are opposites even in the very best of Christians, thou mayst from thence both safely and com-

for-

fortably conclude that where there are moſt fightings againſt grace, there are the trueſt ſymptoms of a living faith. And for the comfortable cloſe be farther ſtrengthened by that bleſſed aſſurance which S. *Paul* giveth thee, 2 *Tim.* 2. 13. that *although* (ſometimes) *thou believeſt not* (though thou canſt not put thy faith into act) *yet God is faithful, who cannot deny himſelf*: he, who hath promiſed, he will not break that bruiſed reed of faith which he himſelf hath planted in thee, will never ſuffer thee to be tempted above that which by his aſſiſting grace thou ſhalt (in his good time) be well able to reſiſt.

By theſe Divine helps with Gods bleſſing upon them, thou mayſt be able to reſiſt both the former temptations and alſo many others of the like nature, moſt of them taking their advantage either from the weakneſs of faith or doubtfulneſs of true repentance: It now only remaineth that I admoniſh thee warily to take heed that thou miſtake not the counterfeits of grace for true and ſaving grace; for the ſafe and godly prevention whereof, take briefly theſe enſuing Rules.

1. Saving graces are rooted habits in the ſoul, cloſely and firmly united like *Ruth* to *Naomi*; whither thou goeſt (be it either into proſperity or adverſity) they will go: But common and counterfeit graces are only tranſient, which for want of depth of earth, when the heat of temptations cometh, ſoon wither away and are gone; as they did in *Demas*.

2. Se-

2. Secondly, they differ much in their operations; counterfeit grace restraining only and tying up corruption for a time, which (still retaining its corrupt nature) would fain get loose to shew it self corruption: But saving grace worketh a thorough change in the heart, whereby it is powerfully inabled (although not always in the same degree of ability) both to hate and overcome corruption.

3. Thirdly, common grace although it may draw men to do spiritual actions, yet with no spiritual delight; from whence it is that usually they relish no sweetness in prayer, no spiritual comfort in reading or hearing God's holy word, no spiritual joy and delight in sanctifying the Sabbath; with several other things of the like nature: But saving grace inables men to do spiritual actions with spiritual delight: And thus it was with holy *David*, *Psal.* 19. 10. *Thy words* (saith he) *are sweeter to me than the honey and the honey comb*: and thus was it with S. *Paul* also, *Rom.* 7. 22. *I delight in the law of the Lord after the inward man*: And from hence especially it is that Gods people, *Psal.* 110. 3. are said by holy *David* to be *a willing people*.

And thus for want of strict examination of the graces by the former Rules too many are deceived with the counterfeits of faith, in stead of saving Faith, to believe for a time and afterwards to fall away & perish everlastingly; with legal Repentance in stead of Evangelical; grieving more for fear of punishment, than for grieving God's holy Spirit; Repenting of their sins, and yet still reteining a secret love to their sins. Of these counterfeits of grace, let every child of

of God carefully beware, but more eſpecially of his Faith and repentance, as the very baſis and foundation of all his Chriſtian comfort: Be religiouſly cautious therefore that (by theſe miſtakes) there be no treaſon at home, and thou needeſt not to fear the dangers of Satan thy profeſſed enemy abroad: from both which and whatſoever elſe may either openly or cloſely indeavour to oppoſe or undermine thy bleſſed intereſt in Chriſt, the Lord (who hath dearly bought thee, and truly and intirely loveth thee) ſave and defend thee; that ſo thou mayſt at laſt be bleſſedly victorious over ſin, Satan, death and hell, and reign triumphantly with him, under whoſe banner thou haſt fought the good fight of Faith, and joyfully finiſhed thy bleſſed courſe: unto whoſe arms of endleſs mercy, I recommend both thee, and all thoſe that truly love and joyfully expect the bleſſed day of his appearing.

Poſtſcript.

Postscript to the Reader.

THUS have I faithfully indeavoured (as God hath graciously inabled me) with all plainness of stile, earnestness of soul, and fervency of affection towards thee,) by the blessed light of his Sacred word, to lead thee from the dark and uncouth paths of sin, which lead to endless destruction, (wherein thou hast found nothing else but shame and sorrow) unto those blessed ones of holiness, which lead to endless happiness: Give me now leave I beseech thee earnestly to beg of thee, as thou lovest the eternal well-fare of thy pretious Soul, not to set light by what thou hast here read, but to make a gratious and a sanctified improvement of it; that so it may become unto thee the blessed savour of Life to Salvation, and not of death unto destruction; and if thou hast here met with any thing of comfort to thy soul, give God the praise, who is the sole and blessed authour and finisher both of thy saving FAITH and timely REPENTANCE, who alone graciously hath wrought in thee both to Will and to Doe; for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever. AMEN.

FINIS.

The Contents.

CHAP. I.

OF the Bleſſed and eternal Being in whom we live and move and have our beings. Pag. 3.

CHAP. II.

Of the ever bleſſed, Sacred and Myſterious TRINITY *in* UNITY. pag. 11.

CHAP. III.

Of the Stupendious Love of God in our Election in Chriſt. pag. 19.

CHAP. IV.

Of the ineffable love of God unto man in the Hypoſtatical union. pag. 33.

CHAP. V.

Of the ſinners ungodly diſtruſt of God's mercy in Chriſt, occaſioned by the multitude, hainouſneſs and long continuance of his ſins. pag. 36.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Upon the great danger of presuming too far upon the rich mercy of God in Christ Jesus, with the sinful and sad consequents thereof. pag. 73.

CHAP. VII.

Of the sweetness, easiness and pleasantness of the ways of God; wherein is plainly discovered the falsity of the supposed difficulty and uncomfortableness thereof. pag. 90.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the true repentance never to be repented of, and the great danger in deferring of it. pag. 100.

CHAP. IX.

Of the inticing enemies of the soul, the sinful pleasures and delights of the world, with holy helps to make resistance in the hour of temptation. pag. 113.

CHAP. X.

Of the blessed state of the righteous, in the safety of their foundation by Faith, upon the blessed corner stone Christ Jesus. pag. 124.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the bleſſed State of the Righteous, in the Honour, Beauty, Strength and Safety of their ſpiritual Building raiſed upon the bleſſed Corner-ſtone Chriſt Jeſus. pag. 136.

CHAP. XII.

Of the ſad and deplorable State of the Wicked, in the deformity, weakneſs and ruine of their carnal Building, ſinfully raiſed upon the falſe and ſandy foundation of their own Righteouſneſs, and their vain hopes of mercy, in the ſinful injoyments of the World. pag. 157.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the ſyncere Chriſtian, and his holy helps in his ſpiritual conflicts. pag. 183.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the true zelot, and his holy exerciſes and improvements of this heavenly grace. pag. 208.

CHAP. XV.

Of the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of life, the terrours and amazements of an unprepared death, and the ſeverity and eternity of puniſhments after death. pag. 231.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Conteining heavenly helps, for weak, doubting, and diſconſolate Chriſtians. pag. 241.

Errata.

PAge 30. *line* 29. *for* precceding, *read* preceding. *p.* 40. *l.* 13. & *p.* 43. *l.* 8. *for* preceeding *r.* preceding, *p.* 43. *l.* 6. *for* Divinty, *r.* Divinity, *p.* 47. *l.* 30. *for* partakers, *r.* partaker, *p.* 48. *l.* 2. *for* children of peace, *r.* children of wrath) become the Sons of peace. *p.* 67. *l.* 22. *for* interceed, *r.* intercede, *p.* 162. *l.* 22. *for* (al) *r.* legal, *p.* 188. *l.* 6. *for* cloſeſt, *r.* cloſet, *p.* 191. *l.* 22. *for* ought, *r.* oughteſt.

Courteous Reader, be pleaſed to take notice, that theſe Book following, &c. are Printed for and ſold by *William Miller* at the *Gilded Acorn* in S. *Paul's Church-yard*, near the little North door.

Juvenal with Cuts, by Sir *Robert Stapylton*, Knight. *folio. lat.*
Elſon on *Coloſſians.*
Cradocks Harmony of the Evangeliſts. *fol.*
Principles. Octav.

Dod

Dod on the Lords Prayer. *quar.*

Medice Cura Teipſum, or the Apothecaries Plea againſt Doctor *Chriſtopher Merret*, *quar.*

Feſtiplace, the ſouls narrow ſearch for ſin, *oct.*

Engliſh Dictionary, or Expoſitor, the twelfth Edition Reviſed and enlarged, by *S.C. duod.*

Compleat Bone-ſetter, *oct.*

Templum Muſicum, or the Muſical Synopſis, *oct.*

The famous game of Cheſs-play, *oct.*

Shelton's Tachygraphia, Lat. oct.

Clark about comfort which Gods children have, or at the leaſt earneſtly deſire and long after whilſt they are in this world, together with the obſtructions of comfort, and the removal of them, *duod.*

Jeofferies New years Gift, *duod.*

Divine Examples of Gods ſevere Judgements upon Sabbath breakers in their unlawful ſports, Collected out of ſeveral Divine Subjects, *viz.* Maſter *H. B.* Maſter *Beard*, and the *Practice of Piety*: a fit monument for our preſent times, *&c.*

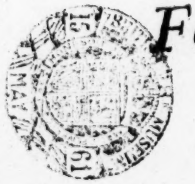
A brief Remembrancer, or the right Improvement of Chriſt's Birth-day.

A ſecond ſheet of old Maſter *Dod's* ſayings, or another Poſie gathered out of Maſter *Dod's* Garden.

The Hunting for Money the firſt part.

The Hunting Match for Money the ſecond part.

At which place you may be furniſhed with moſt ſorts of Acts of Parlament: and other ſorts of ſtiched Books of what kind ſo ever.



Fettiplace's Christian Monitor.